Governor 891

Chapter 891: The Resurrection of the Son of God (Part 2)

"The life support protocol has been fully activated."

Kao'er's voice, resembling an alert tone, was heard by many.

The Destiny Armor, now ready and in a state of activation, was lifted by the mechanical arms and brought in front of the Static Field, ready to be donned by the Son of God at any moment.

At this critical moment, even Chaos seemed to know success or failure hinged on this event. They went berserk, throwing in even greater forces, determined to end this battle and completely eliminate the offspring of The Emperor.

Several powerful Chaos Champions roared as they descended onto the battlefield.

Estella intercepted one of them, her Holy Fire Greatsword clashing with its Power Claw, erupting into blinding flames.

The sacred blaze, through this encounter, seemed to engulf the Chaos Champion, but the opponent was not to be outdone. The pitch-black Demonic Qi stood in opposition, corrupting even the wings of the Living Saint behind her, burning them with corruptive energy causing some scorch marks.

Glaive of the Vengeful Goddess wielded by Grey Knights Grand Master Changding pierced through the chest of another Chaos Champion, only to see a grin emerge: "The Prince of Joy greets you!"

The blessed body by Slaanesh suddenly exploded. From the pink toxic mist emerged the virtual shadow of six Great Demons, their snake-like tails entwined around the Grey Knights Grand Master.

These were not truly six Great Demons, merely projections; but the Great Demons were going all out, and these shadows possessed at least sixty to seventy percent of their original power.

The Grand Master was entangled, instantly falling into peril.

Gu Jing also faced an assault from two Chaos Champions, along with a rampaging Bloodthirster originally entangled with him. Even as the leader of the Infinite Corps, a top Chaos Champion, he couldn't free himself for the moment.

More Demons appeared, this newly emerged batch targeting directly the Son of God in the Static Field.

They only needed to destroy the Static Field to achieve their goal.

Meifenier aimed to do the same.

Though the objectives seemed to align, in truth, Meifenier could not let the Demons succeed.

The one to 'kill' the Son of God must be her, and the weapon must be the Goddess Sword in her hands.

Only the Goddess of life and death could remove the 'Foreordained Death' from the Son of God, allowing the Destiny Armor to subsequently take effect and truly resurrect the Son of God.

And currently, the Destiny Armor had successfully activated, with all necessary elements in place.

With a burst of Spiritual Energy scattering the flying Demons attempting to approach, Meifenier extended the Goddess Sword. Under Gu Jing's desperate gaze, she swung it, severing the energy supply line to the Static Field.

All he could do was watch as the Static Field emitted a glass-shattering sound, the millennia-suspended stream of time crashed forward.

A serene sigh emerged from the Son of God's mouth, piercing through eternity.

The death of the Son of God, halted for ten thousand years, began flowing again.

The next moment he would die from his injuries, from the inescapable Foreordained Death.

But death arrived before the Foreordained Death, coming prematurely.

The Goddess Sword that had just severed the Static Field now appeared in Robert's chest, piercing his heart.

"No!!!" Gu Jing could hardly believe his eyes!

In his thousand-year life, in his hundreds of years as the Battle Group Leader, he had never imagined one day he would witness the Father of Genetics die before him.

He would rather die sooner so he wouldn't have to see this!

Unable to bear watching any longer, he turned his head away, unleashing his fury, fighting recklessly against his enemy, indifferent even to falling on the spot.

This reckless combat came at a cost.

With a sudden burst, he slew a Chaos Champion and banished a Great Demon, yet he was also knocked down to the ground.

However, behind him, unseen, it was not over yet.

The modular Destiny Armor, under operation of the mechanical arms, swiftly approached and, in the blink of an eye, attached itself to the majestic body of the Son of God.

Another moment later, Robert's eyelashes slightly fluttered, the wound on his chest healing visibly.

Together with the Son of God, who slept within the Static Field for ten millennia, the Emperor’s Sword automatically flew into his clasped hand. This weapon, the Emperor’s sidearm from ten millennia ago, during the Emperor’s campaigns, illuminated the entire battlefield before even being drawn.

The Son of God rising from slumber brought calm to the entire battlefield.

Whether foe or ally, all halted at the sight of Robert’s majestic form.

Even Gu Jing was no exception.

The Son of God—a mythic presence—now stood vividly before everyone.

"Doll of the false Emperor!" A Nagor Great Demon squeezed its bloated body forward, a voice layered sevenfold, shaking loose pieces from the hall’s ceiling, "The benevolent father’s gift shall..."

Its corrupt words abruptly ceased.

The Son of God, wielding the Emperor’s Sword, appeared before the Great Demon in the blink of an eye. With a single ferocious slash, he cleaved open its corrupt core, liquid golden light gushed forth from the wounds of the Great Unclean One.

This was the power of the Son of God.

Among The Emperor’s many offspring, Robert was never known for military prowess. His image widely spread in myth is that of a classic magistrate, a wise statesman, managing the Extreme Star Domain’s five hundred worlds efficiently, akin to the wealthiest region in the Empire after the Sun Star Domain. At the same time, under his stewardship, the Infinite Corps burgeoned into the largest in number during the then Legion era.

Chapter 891: Resurrection of the Son of God (Part 2)

Just the number of Infinite Warriors is nearly as many as the total of four or five medium-sized legions combined.

In contrast, his prowess is rarely extolled in myth or history. He is not the type of warrior commander who charges into battle wielding a sharp blade. Even when he participates in war, he often presides at the core, overseeing everything, employing outstanding strategies and tactics to achieve victory.

However, no matter how much of a civil officer he is, no matter how unskilled in combat, this is only in comparison with other Sons of God.

He is still the offspring of The Emperor, a Son of God, one of the perfect individuals crafted by The Emperor as a template.

With just one sword strike, a Great Demon was slain.

What terrified the Demons even more was that the slain foul creature was truly dead.

Demons are inherently immortal. When they come to the real universe, it's a projection, not their essence. Being killed simply means the projection is eliminated. It does affect their true form and takes time to return in Subspace.

The stronger the Demon, the more true this is.

But the Demon slain by Robert with the Emperor's Sword was severed even at its Subspace essence.

This means complete annihilation.

To put it in simpler terms, Demons fighting in the real universe treated it like a game. Death was merely the death of a game character, painful but requiring starting over. Yet, the power of the Emperor's Sword could trace the connection back and slay the player behind it.

This is an entirely different concept.

Realizing this, the Demons present suddenly became panicked.

When faced with true death, even Demons' morale will shatter.

And shatter they did, even faster than in ordinary situations.

The remaining Great Demons fighting screeched as they tried to disengage from the battle and flee.

Upon seeing a Son of God approaching to slay them, they would rather self-destruct, abandoning their hard-earned bodies in the real universe than face Robert's Emperor's Sword, from which golden liquid flowed.

The Chaos Starfield Warriors, on the other hand, stood their ground more resolutely.

But then, what of it?

Once the Son of God joined the battle, the change in the situation was immense.

It didn't matter if you were a Terror Demon Berserker, a Chaos Champion, or an Evil Wizard; none could withstand Robert's second strike.

Moreover, their attacks were incapable of threatening Robert. Even the Subspace Evil Magic disintegrated directly before the Son of God, unable to affect him in any manner.

These Chaos Starfield Warriors continued to struggle and fight to the death. Even though under the Son of God's pressure, they were nearly in despair, yet they refused to surrender, persisting in their fight.

This alone demonstrated that this assault unit of the Chaos Starfield Warriors was indeed elite among traitors. They were determined to succeed in this operation.

However, the disparity in strength was insurmountable.

With Robert now awakened, he pronounced their mission to prevent the Son of God's resurrection as a failure.

No more new enemies emerged from the Subspace rifts. The Chaos Starfield Warriors still in combat had effectively been abandoned.

Though the battle was not yet over, it was evidently predetermined.

For Robert, the more important task ahead was to understand the current situation he faced, how he survived the past ten thousand years, and what the Empire is dealing with today.

At the same time, he had to address the most immediate threat before him — although the battle at the Divine Successor Hall was won, the siege of the Super Sea Star was not lifted. The entire war spanning the Infinite Starfield was still ongoing.

This was the first challenge the Son of God had to face after awakening.

...

In Gu Hang's view, Robert was destined to overcome it.

Through his son's perspective, Gu Hang effectively witnessed Robert's entire resurrection process up close, at a VIP angle.

And he understood how this whole process occurred.

It was connected to Subspace essence.

The resurrection of Living Saints was due to being granted Subspace essence by a god, be it The Emperor or Gu Hang. When they die in the real universe, like a Demon, as long as their Subspace essence remains intact, they are not truly dead and can return once more.

The Son of God is different, with a much more complex situation.

Physical harm alone may not seriously impact a Son of God; however, more troubling is the 'fated death' curse entangled around him, as Gu Hang saw it.

This was an Evil enchantment aiming to destroy Robert's Subspace essence. Without removing it, no matter how exquisite the technology of the Destiny Armor created by Great Sage Kao'er to sustain bodily function, it could not save the Son of God's life.

The true solution came from the Divine Envoy of the Spirit Race.

In Gu Hang's vision, their goddess flickered in and out.

She seemed a unique entity, perhaps a racial deity, though her state was peculiar.

Though powerful, she was evasive and reluctant to reveal herself, with merely veiled power.

Though weak, the peculiar authority she wields stood out. Through the Goddess Sword, she truly could achieve a cycle of life and death, something Gu Hang found astonishing.

The curse of 'fated death' that Gu Hang tried hard to resolve ultimately wasn't resolved. It was only through the Son of God's death that the curse fulfilled its purpose and dissipated. But through the power of Windsor Goddess, life and death exchanged places, bringing Robert back, and with the Destiny Armor healing his fatal wounds, the resurrection process was complete.

The resurrection of the Son of God was now a reality.

Gu Hang harbors no doubt that he will ultimately secure victory in the Infinite Starfield War.

Though the enemy is formidable, Gu Hang, through brief observation of Robert, could perceive that these so-called Sons of God indeed possessed tremendous strength and wisdom.

This was clear from their powerful Subspace essence.

Even Robert's relatively weaker trait of 'martial prowess' could easily overpower the strongest entity Gu Hang ever faced in the real universe — the Bone Shattering King.

His victory in the Infinite Starfield War was an inevitability.

Gu Hang was more concerned with what actions this Son of God would take next.

After reclaiming his Infinite Starfield, what would he do?

What changes would arise for the Empire and humanity from the Son of God awakened since the inception of the Human Empire and coming from ten thousand years ago?

And how would it impact the Alliance?

These are the matters that truly left Gu Hang in eager anticipation.

Chapter 892: The Sluggish Holy Terra

In the period that followed, Gu Hang consistently monitored the situation in the Infinite Starfield.

That brat Gu Jing, by a twist of fate, found himself in a unique adventure, becoming involved in the Empire's significant events.

For the moment, he couldn't return, and thus ended up under the banner of the Son of God, Robert, entering a war that originally had little to do with him.

The development of the whole war, as he initially estimated, did not differ much.

Under the command artistry of the Son of God, even though the Infinite Corps were at a disadvantage, they gradually turned the situation around.

He was like an immensely calm and precise command machine, always able to position troops and firepower where they were most needed and where they could be most effective.

Simultaneously, he could always accurately predict and judge the enemy's movements and intentions, making preparations in advance.

He could meticulously account for all available resources, whether troops, firepower, or materials, devising the most comprehensive battle plans. Once he began to engage in combat, despite no changes in total resources, cries of lacking soldiers and weapons faded from all fronts, and there was no shortage of firepower or ammunition.

A squad of top experts, including himself, were also crucial assets during his command. Whenever they were deployed individually or in groups, they always affected the battlefield accordingly.

Without external support and with Super Sea Star's surroundings locked down, they relied on internal resources and forces to turn the situation around.

Moreover, they managed to establish contact with support outside the Starfield.

How fearsome was the Son of God's influence?

The Five Hundred Worlds of the Infinite Starfield, already integrated as one, erupted upon hearing of the Son of God's revival!

And this news was spreading swiftly to farther locations.

Indeed, to some extent, this news didn't even need to spread.

Upon Robert's revival, the entire universe felt some divine sign, as Interstellar Warriors and the Chapters of Infinite Warriors with Robert's bloodline experienced an overwhelming stir in their blood, driven by an uncanny force.

Maybe at first they could not connect this special feeling to the event of their Father of Genetics coming back to life. But once Robert appeared before them, they would instantly understand.

What did this mean? With Robert's call, the Empire's largest group and nearly a third of active battle Chapters—Infinite Warriors—would instantly become his most devout followers.

Not just those in the Infinite Starfield; all Chapters of Infinite Warriors were like this, all bloodlines were the same.

It also included those Genetic Seeds belonging to the Infinite Warriors that Gu Hang redeemed from the system, to form a new corps.

Such was the case for Infinite Warriors, and for other corps too. Even though they didn't share Robert's bloodline, they could still call him 'Uncle' or 'Patriarch'—Interstellar Warriors easily recalled their once glorious times under the flag of the Sons of God, fighting together, thus inclined towards or even accepting a Son of God as leader.

Even if this Son of God was not their Father of Genetics, it didn't undermine his greatness. Interstellar Warriors held him in high regard, instinctively uniting the entire Empire's loyal Interstellar Warriors.

What would happen with such support?

What impact would his resurrection have on the Empire's political landscape?

It would certainly be a positive change.

Gu Hang held significant concerns about the Empire's current state.

On the Dark Side, he, the Alliance, and the Dark Side Expedition were making remarkable progress. While conditions outside the Alliance-controlled regions were dire, there was hope. Overall, the Dark Side Expedition was proceeding smoothly, advancing steadily, and eventually, the entire Dark Side of the Empire would be reclaimed following this trend.

No matter how many obstacles lie ahead, or if there are more challenging battles than the Omeglia Campaign, before the Dark Side Expedition is thwarted or the Alliance stands defeated, everything is moving towards a positive trajectory.

However, on Holy Terra's side, not even the slightest signs of improvement were seen.

Gu Hang received very little news regarding Holy Terra from this side, and almost none of it was good.

The Sun Star Domain has witnessed numerous uprisings over these decades, with external invasions, internal rebellions, cults, alien threats... But against all these, Terra, the Empire's center, responded exceedingly sluggishly. Though one problem was suppressed after another, new issues surfaced while solving any single one.

Not only were their responses too slow, but they also seemed indecisive and incapable, failing to resolve the fundamental issues.

Thus, rebellion, alien invasions, cults, and chaos corruption proliferated endlessly.

Gu Hang even believed that Holy Terra, with its billion-billion population, was now a breeding ground for chaos.

Chapter 892: The Sluggish Holy Terra (Part 2)

Under the leadership of Holy Terra, they might have opened up communication and navigation between the surrounding Sun Star Domain and even the Sun Zhou Domain. However, as the area under Terra government's control grew larger, they not only failed to gain more strength, but instead acquired more burdens.

This stark contrast is like the Dark Side Expedition.

The more the Dark Side Expedition fights, the larger it becomes. Every captured location, with slight development, becomes a supply source rather than a burden in most cases. In rare unfortunate cases, it doesn't affect the overall situation. In such circumstances, naturally, the more they fight, the more it flourishes.

But for Holy Terra re-expanding the Empire's scale, perhaps at first, it could rely on the immense wealth accumulated in Terra to support it; but if most newly captured worlds are a burden, even Holy Terra cannot bear such a load.

What's even scarier is that the Central Empire was still executing the old policies with massive inertia.

The governance line of Star Domain Head, Star Zone Leader, and Planetary Governor continued to prevail.

Though the Alliance here also uses this system, it's only similar in name, completely different inside. Each level of government has clear work objectives and assessments, following direct arrangements from the Alliance Central Government. Officials are appointed by the central authority with terms; they get promoted if they do well and dismissed if they do poorly.

But in the Empire? The Planetary Governors are still like those local emperors; the Central Empire only collects taxes and doesn't care about specific governance and development. Only when the problems on a planet are so big that it cannot solve them by itself and requests aid from the Empire, does support possibly arrive after long administrative approvals and preparations. Perhaps with luck, some problems can be solved, but the world, suffering from a disaster, is severely damaged. How can it continue to provide the same resources to the Central Empire?

In Gu Hang's view, in such a catastrophe era impacting the entire Empire, the Central Empire cannot cling to that outdated system from the past.

Perhaps in the past, that system barely operated. In scenarios where the Central Empire didn't need to manage so many regions directly, though slow and inefficient, it managed to steadily rule vast territories.

But in this unprecedented critical situation in ten thousand years, doing so certainly won't work.

Gu Hang, with the Alliance, in a hundred-year expedition, had almost conquered one-third of the Dark Side of the Empire, while Holy Terra on the other side couldn't even handle issues right at its doorstep.

Gu Hang expressed great disappointment.

Those who held positions without contributions on Holy Terra were truly incompetent.

What Prime Minister Qi Bodu and the like, were all useless.

During conflicts, everyone seems more aggressive than the last, but in essence, is there anyone worthy? In such crucial times, they possess neither the vision nor the capability to lead the Empire towards necessary reform, pulling it out from the quagmire.

Gu Hang found it challenging to manage the other side of the Scarlet Scar. He and his Alliance still need to focus primarily on the Dark Side Expedition.

But he can't just watch the other side of the Empire rot away.

He needs a role that can turn everything around in Holy Terra.

Son of God, Robert, is just such a role.

Besides him, perhaps no one else can do it.

He's the strongest in internal affairs among the Sons of God.

The Empire doesn't necessarily need a powerful warrior or commander. The Human Empire, even to this extent, doesn't lack absolute strength.

But it desperately lacks someone who can integrate and make use of the Empire's strength.

Robert has this capability.

And his identity as a Son of God gives him the prestige.

Prime Minister Qi Bodu and other High Lords on Holy Terra couldn't do a few tasks well; they lacked the resolution and ability to lead the Empire in reform. However, asking them to straightforwardly relinquish their power was extremely difficult.

They are themselves the resistance to reform.

And wishing to swiftly change everything through a non-violent way, borrowing Robert's identity as Son of God is the only option.

Only he can have sufficient prestige to change everything.

But the premise is that he must safely reach Holy Terra.

About this, Gu Hang indeed had some concerns.

The current war facing the Infinite Starfield is not small in scale, though, Gu Hang believes Robert is about to win.

But afterwards, how will he reach Holy Terra?

The distance from the Infinite Starfield to Holy Terra is not short.

Does Robert have to initiate a campaign like the Dark Side Expedition? Step by step, starting from the five hundred worlds of the Infinite Starfield, heading towards Holy Terra?

Fight for another hundred years until reaching Holy Terra?

The situation will have long deteriorated by then!

It's difficult for Gu Hang to directly interfere with Robert's decision, but even so, once Robert starts moving, launching from the Infinite Starfield, then let it be, at least the other side of the Empire can see hope.

...

Compared to Gu Hang's focus on the Infinite Starfield, currently, an important war of the Alliance itself is underway.

In the direction further west from the Skywatch Starfield, Yan Fangxu, leading the Western Expedition Army, had entered the Great Vortex Cosmic Domain.

And here, they discovered a world named Guard Star.

Its most distinguishing feature lies in its back, where there is a stable Star Realm Tunnel, which can penetrate the Scarlet Scar to reach the other side.

This is a 'corridor,' with Guard Star located on the Dark Side of the Empire. From Guard Star, heading northwest on the star chart, the next world is Red Glory IV, followed by Red Glory III and Red Glory II, then Yiling III and Yiling II, and finally Valley Star.

In total, these seven star systems form such a corridor.

Passing through the corridor is essentially crossing the Scarlet Scar.

Furthermore, most importantly, these seven worlds remain under human control.

On the side of Valley Star, it belongs to the Godelia Cosmic Domain, Mercifat Star Domain. In this star domain, there exists a famous battle group — the Saints Battle Group.

This is currently one of the Empire's nine remaining original Battle Groups, the direct lineage battle group reformed from the former Saints Legion.

The lineage of Saints, second only to the Infinite Warriors in number within the entire Empire.

After the catastrophe, the situation in the Mercifat Star Domain was stabilized, largely due to the Saints' contributions.

After stabilizing the star domain's situation, they also discovered the existence of the 'corridor.'

The leader of the Saints, declared a Living Saint by the National Church, Percy Remonvis, keenly recognized the corridor's significance.

He rallied many Saints sub-groups, persuaded the National Church, leveraging their influence, jointly forming a massive force, maintaining the stability of the Mercifat Star Domain and extending arms to sustain this corridor.

The entire process was quite arduous.

They have nearly fought here for over thirty years. The seven worlds in the corridor, though considered stable, are only so compared to other impassable areas of the Scarlet Scar. Sandwiched between the Scarlet Scar on both sides, the pressure on these seven worlds is quite intense. Chaos enemies continuously attack from various directions, crazily assaulting everywhere.

The Saints, along with the most steadfast Holy War Army of the National Church, stand at the forefront here.

Every one of these seven worlds has been lost at least three times, but within a few years, they would be reclaimed.

As an Interstellar Warrior who has been titled a Living Saint, Remonvis is epitomized for his resilience.

Yet after thirty years of war trials, even he began to feel somewhat disoriented.

Why do the reports submitted to Holy Terra always disappear without a trace? Occasional replies bring no good news.

Can’t the High Lords see how vital this corridor linking the two sides of the Empire is?

Support is delayed indefinitely, and the expected Expeditionary Force is nowhere to be seen.

Amid brutal warfare, with soldiers continuously sacrificing, he’s forced to question whether the Saints’ persistence here has any true significance?

Chapter 893: Savior of the Saint

Another orbital defense platform of the Guard Star melted into molten iron amidst the Chaos flame in Subspace.

Raymond Vis gazed through the porthole at the orbital defense line collapsing in the Chaos onslaught.

What else could he say?

Only a long sigh.

"Prepare yourselves, we are breaking through." He issued the command.

The reactions varied.

Some were in disbelief, some questioned:

"Are we going to abandon the Guard Star?!"

This was not an easy decision to accept.

Guarding the Guard Star, from a macro perspective, had been ongoing for decades; from the present viewpoint, this Chaos invasion had lasted seven months. Though the battle was tough, honestly, the enemy's strength compared to many past crises faced by the Guard Star was only moderate.

So many past dangers had been overcome, what's there to fear about this not-so-severe one?

The main reason the Guard Star's garrison decided to call for reinforcements was primarily due to dwindling resources, and the diminished forces over the seven months of battle.

However, they were confident that once supplies were normalized, they could repel this not-so-intense Chaos invasion without any problem.

Everything was unfolding as the garrison anticipated.

Reinforcements did come, led by Raymond Vis himself, the Battle Group Leader of the Saints Battle Group, known as the 'Master of Rift' who had steadfasted the Corridor Worlds with the people.

With this, what problem could there possibly be in winning the upcoming war?

Therefore, when Raymond Vis issued the command to break through, which was practically equivalent to abandoning the Guard Star, it was incredibly hard for them to accept.

But in reality, more people accepted Raymond Vis's orders.

Because they truly could not hold out any longer.

This time, although the invading enemy was not much stronger than before, with Raymond Vis's support, they might win, but what about next time?

For Mercifat to assemble the full force of a single Star Domain to resist for thirty years was already the limit.

Indeed, the enemy had not grown stronger, but the home forces growing weaker was an irreversible reality.

The days of supplies arriving on demand and depleted military quotas being quickly replenished were gone for good.

Yet, the situation at the Guard Star was deteriorating.

Not only were Chaos Army waves from the Scarlet Scar met in succession, but internally, this world of over two billion people faced numerous internal disasters.

Its proximity to the Scarlet Scar was too close, leading to endless chaos corruption. This not only sparked many cult and rebel issues but also unleashed large-scale supernatural plagues.

The Nagor plague, which turned people into zombies and spread further; the Terror Demon plague, which drove people insane and bloodthirsty, both were terrifying.

And the cults of indulgence and conspiracy must be under the influence of other Subspace Powerhouses.

These issues were so severe that they actually tied up half of the defensive forces and severely crippled the Guard Star's own economic productivity.

Apart from Chaos threats, there was also the threat of Aliens. The Guard Star struggled for thirty years to eradicate the Green Skins but never succeeded; they killed many so-called patient zeroes and patriarchs, but the parasitic infection swarm always resurged...

The population of twenty billion before the war decreased to just six billion over the thirty years.

Severe economic destruction meant they could not even supply the army's needs, instead requiring food allocation from outside to sustain the planet.

The Guard Star was undoubtedly a huge burden.

It wasn't just the Guard Star; the entire Corridor's seven worlds were the same.

However, the Guard Star bore the brunt.

The problems here were the most severe, and it was also the farthest from the Saints' base, Mercifat.

Before the Catastrophe Era, a journey with seven Star Realm Tunnel crossings was nothing; half a month or a month's voyage would suffice. After the Catastrophe Era, risks sharply increased, but for the Saints Battle Group, who could quickly unite an entire Star Domain, it was still acceptable, not too problematic.

However, the key here was the 'Corridor,' crossing the Scarlet Scar, making the navigation difficulty ten times higher than usual.

The difficulty of sending reinforcements from Mercifat to the Guard Star could be easily imagined.

They had attempted to reclaim some human worlds on the Dark Side of the Empire and the Guard Star's side to support the Guard Star.

Yet, that still equated to an expedition across the 'Corridor.'

The difficulty remained immense.

Several worlds were opened but were hard to maintain and eventually lost. The entire operation resulted in not just failing to ease the pressure or bring benefits, but even greater losses.

As the Mercifat Star Domain became increasingly exploited and difficult to bear, leading to some rebellions not even influenced by Chaos but purely due to over-exploitation, Raymond Vis had no choice but to make this hard decision.

His aim in personally leading the main force to the Guard Star was not just pure support or relief but also to personally lead an effort to recover as much as possible of the past three decades' investments from the Guard Star.

Chapter 893: Savior of the Saints (Part 2)

The army and essential military supplies must be taken away; some production factories, and some population deemed relatively problem-free, should also be taken away as much as possible.

Of course, in the end, it's still a small portion that can be taken.

The majority of the population must ultimately be abandoned along with the Guard Star.

But what else can be done?

All opposing voices were suppressed by Raymond Vis with his prestige, and more people were tacitly relieved.

The breakout operation began to be prepared.

There are fifteen days left.

During these fifteen days, those that need to be loaded onto ships should be loaded. This is the final evacuation deadline.

When the time comes, the entire army will abandon all existing defenses, and the fleet will break through.

Just when the preparation for the breakout had proceeded to the eighth day, humanity's Star Speaker observed significant movement at the star realm tunnel jump point of the Guard Star.

Raymond Vis had thought it was another Chaos Fleet.

When the star signal reception converted into visual signals, creating a holographic image, and showcased the entire fleet, Raymond Vis's hands trembled slightly.

The ships adorned in silver and blue paint appeared well-maintained and brand-new. The expanded wing of the human Sky Eagle insignia on the bow made everyone present cheer with excitement—this was the first time in thirty years they had seen a new type of battleship that wasn't from the Chaos demons, composed of bloody flesh and tangled metal!

Besides the insignia representing the Human Empire's Sky Eagle, they observed another insignia of clasped hands, though a bit unfamiliar, as they hadn't interacted before. But after a bit of recollection, they recognized what it was—an Alliance symbol.

The communication signal quickly traversed the turbulent subspace waves, unstable and crackling with electronic noise, but it was reassuringly calm.

"This is the Fourth Vanguards Fleet of the Western Expeditionary Force of the Alliance. I am Admiral Yemel, speaking on behalf of Marshal Yan Fangxu, High Lord and Dark Side of the Empire's savior Gu Hang, saluting all defenders. We are en route to the battlefield and plan to attack the Chaos Fleet orbiting in sixteen hours. Please assist as the situation allows."

After contemplating for a full fifteen minutes, Raymond Vis made his decision.

He responded to the star signal, stating his identity and promising to cooperate in launching the attack.

...

During the ensuing war, the Saints witnessed the strength of the Alliance Fleet.

The Chaos Fleet besieging the Super Sea Star was no weak force but one that they could withstand and repel, albeit at a considerable cost.

However, under the assault of the Alliance Fleet, they quickly collapsed.

The Alliance's naval combat tactics appeared well-honed. Clearly, this fleet was well-acquainted with war, accumulating mature experiences from numerous battles. Furthermore, they seemed very familiar with fighting the Chaos Fleet.

This navy is no rookie outfit.

But one wouldn't guess it from just looking.

Their ships looked too 'new.'

Presumably, they underwent extensive maintenance and repairs before joining the battle.

Not just post-Catastrophe Era; even pre-Catastrophe Era, many Imperial Navy ships rarely had such excellent maintenance conditions.

In fact, even calling these all new ships wouldn't be far-fetched.

Moreover, part of the Alliance Fleet's showcased powerful combat capability, aside from highly qualified and experienced crew, largely depended on their extremely strong ships!

With well-maintained equipment, usability is greatly enhanced.

Not to mention, those few battleships and carriers arrayed themselves with over two hundred cruisers, destroyers, and other well-structured fleet configurations... that was solid power.

Superior numbers and quality meant the Chaos Fleet couldn't resist.

Raymond Vis looked at this brand-new fleet, and he couldn't help but show envy in his eyes.

Now, even if they assembled the entire Saints Battle Group's deployable fleet, it'd likely only be this scale—except the timeless Queen of Glory.

However, according to Admiral Yemel, they were only a detachment fleet of the Alliance's Western Expeditionary Force. Such detachment fleets probably existed in many numbers, plus a main fleet, likely much larger, forming the so-called Western Expeditionary Force. The Alliance had four expeditionary armies in total, divided by the cardinal directions.

How could this not stir envy?

Moreover, what aroused not only envy but even fear was the power's underlying depth.

Raymond Vis inevitably compared it to Holy Terra.

After thirty years of seeking aid, aside from repeated empty words, he saw no support, along with his deduction from limited information of Holy Terra's apparent chaos, self-occupied mess.

Coming from Spiderweb Domain, Eastern Cosmos Domain—far border areas of the Empire—the Alliance's Dark Side Expedition reached here...

The comparison is evident.

...

The naval battle ended, and the human side achieved a decisive victory, dealing a annihilating blow to the Chaos Fleet, leaving only a few ships escaping.

On the orbital defense platform, the victors from both sides met.

Raymond Vis met Admiral Yemel.

Somewhat unexpectedly, they were quite a young mortal general.

Beside them была two battle group leaders from two respective groups.

Through brief communication, he learned these were full-strength battle groups established in the 'Fourth Dark Side Military Foundation.'

One was the 'Silk Brocade' group, still a child group of the Saints.

Zhao Faren, leader of the Silk Brocade, eagerly shook his hand in a tribute similar to how children groups typically behaved upon meeting their parent group.

But something in Raymond Vis's mind felt odd.

What's this Dark Side Military Foundation? How come I've never heard of it, let alone its fourth iteration?

Silk Brocade group? How come I wasn't aware our Saints had such a child group?

While Gu Hang was indeed a High Lord, did he have the authority to establish new Interstellar Warrior groups?

Though founding a new group, even using the Saints' genetic seeds, shouldn't relate to the parent group—decided by Holy Terra and Mars, notifying the founding group at most.

Let's assume this is a special means for exceptional times... but how did the Alliance obtain the Saints' genetic seeds, enough to establish an entire full-strength group?

And can they be replenished instantly and rapidly?

Too exaggerated...

Despite myriad doubts in his heart, he had no choice but to acknowledge that a savior had arrived.

His intent wasn't to abandon the Guard Star. Making that decision also caused him great pain.

Now, there was no need for suffering anymore.

The vanguard fleet brought not just powerful naval forces but also two full battle groups, along with the formidable Navy Marine Corps and a substantial load of Alliance Army.

With their joining, threats on the Guard Star's surface would soon be quelled.

Everything seemed like a dream.

He awaited thirty years for the Holy Terra's aid, in vain.

Just as despair set upon abandoning, the Alliance arrived.

...

Through brief communication, he understood these were two full-strength groups, established in the 'Fourth Dark Side Military Foundation.'

One was the 'Silk Brocade' group, a sub-group of the Saints.

Zhao Faren of the Silk Brocade, with great admiration, shook hands in salutation, behaving like a typical child group upon meeting their parent group.

But something in Raymond Vis's mind felt peculiar.

What's this Dark Side Military Foundation? How come I've never heard of it, let alone its fourth iteration?

Silk Brocade group? How come I wasn't aware our Saints had such a child group?

While Gu Hang was indeed a High Lord, did he have the authority to establish new Interstellar Warrior groups?

Though founding a new group, even using the Saints' genetic seeds, shouldn't relate to the parent group—it's decided by Holy Terra and Mars, notifying at most the founding group.

Assume it's a special method for a special period... but from where did the Alliance acquire the Saints' genetic seeds, sufficient to establish a whole full-strength group?

And even replenish swiftly and readily?

Far too exaggerated...

Chapter 894: The Meaning of a Meal

After initial contact, the Expeditionary Force and the Saints Battle Group reached a temporary agreement to establish a joint command.

Although the temporary agreement did not cover political or economic matters, a substantial military alliance between them had already been formed.

In this temporary agreement, the Alliance showed considerable respect for the Saints Battle Group.

After all, it is a newly formed group.

The joint command sees both sides collaborating, not extremely closely, but it can be considered a co-command.

On actual ground combat, both sides fight side by side, generally establishing who will take the lead in a specific direction or battle; it could be anyone from either side.

Initially, the primary role in ground combat fell to the Saints Battle Group and the Mortal Troops they organized—the Holy War Army.

After all, it was a home game for them; they were familiar with the situation on Guard Star and the enemies.

Once the Alliance forces descended, it was only natural that they should listen, learn with humility, as expected.

But soon, the leadership in combat shifted to the Alliance.

The reason was simply their financial power.

Often, being financially powerful means being able to fight effectively.

...

Raymond Vis listened to many frontline battle reports.

He never doubted the Alliance Army's characteristic of being 'wealthy.'

Just look at their brand-new, beautiful warships, and you'd understand.

However, from his many years of inertia within the Human Empire, he lacked a concrete understanding of to what extent this so-called ’wealth’ actually extended.

Until one day, an event gave him a true and concrete sense.

It was while he was on his way to the front line, reinforcing a somewhat difficult battle.

He saw an Alliance platoon retreating from the front lines.

This platoon looked like a typical Alliance Army unit, fully outfitted in battle gear, with lightweight ceramic steel vests and helmets. They lacked Feedback-Type Power Armor, and there were only a few exoskeletons. About ten Heavy Bomb Machine Guns, two individual plasma beam cannons for position setup, fixed firepower. Five Hot Melt Guns, along with a military truck loaded with ready-to-use individual anti-armor rockets, high-explosive grenade launchers, and company mortars... in any case, the truck was loaded.

Raymond Vis didn’t feel envious at all.

So what? Our elite infantry battalion in the Holy War Army can have this setup too!

You say this is the Alliance’s disposable cannon-fodder company?

There is no such organizational title in the Alliance Army, don’t try to deceive me!

He could only comfort himself this way, seeking some mental balance.

What comforted him more was hearing several ordinary soldiers of this platoon complaining about food issues as he passed by.

They were cursing the logistics unit, calling them worse than pigs and dogs for making them, who were fighting hard on the front lines, eat this pig food for nearly half a month without any improvement!

Raymond Vis was not a bitter person and didn't find joy in the Alliance soldiers having a rough time. But... he needed some balance, otherwise, the backbone of the Seven Star Corridor he proudly built, the Mortal Troops Holy War Army, wouldn't seem too lacking, right?

But his joy didn't last long, and his face even changed a bit.

He saw the 'pig food' these Alliance 'cannon-fodders' were complaining about.

It was a standard individual ration pack that included a self-heating meal pack containing high-calorie carbs like noodles/rice/white bread, sauces, meats, and vegetable jerky, ready to eat a minute after opening.

A snack, often sandwich cookies, small cakes.

Two meat cans, looking like some animal meat and seafood.

Additionally, there were various snacks like cheese sticks, candies, jellies, energy bars, chocolate bars, a bit random.

Quick supplements, with composite energy/vitamin/protein, a tube made a meal. Soldiers were too lazy to eat it unless during a battle when they didn't even have time to use the ration pack, then they would take one go.

Besides, there were beverage packs, usually instant powders, tea, drink mix, milk powder, instant coffee... all sorts, instantly drinkable with water.

What could Raymond Vis say?

He recalled that since the start of the war, he had never eaten this well!

Interstellar Warriors were strong and consumed much more energy than regular soldiers at each meal. However, in terms of taste and variety, they were nowhere near as rich. It was probably just those composite energy bars, eating more of those, or simply heated synthetic starch blocks...

Of course, it wasn't that he couldn't afford it.

He was a leader, if he wanted to satisfy his appetite, why could he not do so? No matter how big of an eater an Interstellar Warrior was, it wouldn't bankrupt them.

He didn't value gourmet pleasures much and was determined to set an example, to share the same hardships with the lower soldiers.

This exemplary role had a little effect.

When ordinary Holy War Army soldiers were not full from eating synthetic starch, and they thought their leader, the Emperor's Death Angel, this noble Living Saint, ate the same as them, perhaps their morale would be a bit higher?

Indeed it was so.

Chapter 894: The Meaning of a Meal (Part 2)

However, this outcome is vastly different from the Alliance genuinely ensuring that every soldier can eat well. In contrast, Raymond Vis could clearly realize that what he was doing was just putting on a show when there was no other option.

Does eating well mean they can fight?

As a seasoned commander, Raymond Vis's answer is undoubtedly: Yes!

Eating well means they can fight.

No matter how advanced the equipment gets or how well-trained the soldiers are, they still need ample physical strength and a strong physique to support their tactical actions.

Simply ensuring the soldiers are full might maintain their stamina, but maintaining their physique would be a bit challenging without eating well.

Moreover, eating well boosts morale significantly. Alliance soldiers might complain about the ’slop,’ yet it doesn’t stop them from fighting valiantly. But feed them actual slop, and that would be a different story.

However, the most terrifying thing is the significance behind the phenomenon of ensuring the soldiers eat well.

The productivity of the Alliance, the logistical support of the Alliance Army... these are the keys to victory.

Food supply is, of course, a crucial aspect of logistical supply. Warriors need weapons and equipment to fight wars, but they also need to be well-fed. However, once basic food supply is ensured, the importance of food quality drops rapidly.

After all, compared to the quality of food, there are other more important things in military operations that need transportation.

And there’s no doubt that the Alliance’s allocation of military supplies is without issue. They even have enough surplus to ensure the soldiers’ tastes, even to the point of spoiling them.

If they can even ensure tastes, then there’s no need to mention anything else.

...

After returning to the base camp once the important assault target at the front lines was resolved, Raymond Vis didn’t forget what happened beforehand.

He specifically went to take a look at what exactly the Alliance's meals were like.

It was in one of the Alliance's divisions, where the soldiers ate. You could call it a field canteen.

And it wasn't just one, nor was there just one style.

One food truck after another served as kitchens. To Raymond Vis, the chefs in logistics were hardly different from top restaurant chefs. They skillfully placed pot after pot of freshly made dishes on the tables. Each one

In that moment, if it weren't for the surroundings being the wilderness, if it weren't for the diners in military uniforms, Raymond Vis would really think he was in a food street.

All right, I've lost hope.

But at the same time, another thought started to sprout from this realization.

By now, he thoroughly understood what the Alliance had achieved over the past century after the Catastrophe Era.

The Expeditionary Force had given him full insight.

He had little doubt.

This couldn't lie.

Looking at the state of mind and morale of the Alliance soldiers was proof enough; the fact that the Alliance controlled more than ten Cosmos Domains on the Dark Side of the Empire, nearly a third or half, proved how successful the Dark Side Expedition was.

In terms of legitimacy... what legitimacy? Achieving accomplishments like this is the greatest legitimacy!

Raymond Vis had already had enough of Holy Terra.

...

Gu Hang had already been paying attention from the start of the Guard Star Campaign.

Establishing a passage to the other side of the Empire was of immense strategic value.

And with the Saints Battle Group stationed there, it was all the better.

Without doubt, with the Seven Star Corridor fully under human control rather than being occupied by Chaos, it saved the Alliance Expeditionary Force a great deal of trouble.

If that wasn't the case, and the seven stars were fully occupied, being so close to the Scarlet Scar, it would have been trapped there. If Chaos occupied it, within ten years, these seven worlds would become semi-Subspace. To fight then would be akin to a Subspace expedition, with Demons spawning directly from the land, forcing the Western Expedition Army to exert the same effort as the Omeglia Campaign just to win, with heavy losses.

But now, a single advance fleet was enough to handle the situation.

Gu Hang's orders had already been dispatched to the Western Command Center.

Yan Fangxu's next critical task was to fortify the Seven Star Corridor. Simultaneously, he needed to focus on clearing the Mingshu Star Domain on the Dark Side linked to the Corridor, ensuring the stability of these worlds.

Subsequently, the Alliance's administration would quickly follow up, implementing rapid alliances in the Mingshu Star Domain. With a strong military presence, this process should be relatively smooth. Massive investments would follow, striving to turn the Mingshu Star Domain into a critical front-line military industrial area to provide close supplies to the Seven Star Corridor.

The ultimate goal is to reinforce the Seven Star Corridor as if it were an impregnable fortress, with seven Fortress Worlds in front, supported by the Saint's capital in the Mercifat Star Domain, and the Alliance-built Mingshu Star Domain at the rear, greatly enhancing its stability.

Meanwhile, after the Thunder Torch Tower in the Seven Stars is completed, Gu Hang would allocate part of his efforts to maintaining this passage.

Then, once the stabilization of the Seven Star Corridor is complete, the Alliance can consider using this corridor to bypass Scarlet Scar, transforming the Dark Side Expedition into a legitimate reclamation of the entire Empire and its territories.

As for whether this task will fall to the Western Expeditionary Force or if a new force should be formed specifically for this, that is something to be decided later.

The other pleasant surprise came from within the Saints Battle Group itself.

When the Guard Star Campaign was nearing completion and the fourth advance fleet provided a batch of supplies to the Saints Battle Group and the Holy War Army free of charge, preparing to move deeper into the corridor, Raymond Vis proposed some conditions.

He hoped to sign a series of more in-depth cooperation agreements between the Saints Battle Group, as the protector of the Mercifat Star Domain, and as the Living Saint of the National Church, with the Alliance and the Imperial Dark Side Management Committee.

In name, of course, the Saints wouldn't join the Alliance. But essentially, Raymond Vis's preliminary intention was to join the Imperial Dark Side Management Committee.

For this, they were even willing to accept the presence of Alliance administrators in the Mercifat Star Domain; to accept Alliance investment, even if it meant sharing control; they were willing to incorporate the Saints Battle Group, the twelve subgroups they rallied, and the so-called Holy War Army, which broke through Imperial law under the guise of the Battle Group Auxiliary Army, into the Alliance's operational command system...

Of course, there were many details. Raymond Vis was not selling himself for free; he also had many demands. For instance, he required the Alliance's substantial investment in the Mercifat Star Domain, guarantees for religion, investment in fortifying the Seven Star Corridor, and subsequent planning for an expedition on the other side of the corridor, the so-called Imperial Holy Territory...

Gu Hang saw no reason to refuse any of these.

Many of the conditions Raymond Vis proposed were things the Alliance was already planning to do, just with a bit more intensity.

The additional investment was a bargain for gaining the allegiance of a fledgling Battle Group.

This campaign, the Seven Star Corridor itself, was naturally the Alliance's greatest demand, with its high strategic value.

The Saints Battle Group was Gu Hang's next important target.

He had been considering how to win over this Battle Group as a breakthrough point.

But to his surprise, they came knocking of their own accord.

Even in name, with this preliminary intention, the Saints were 'our own people.'

Gu Hang looked forward to seeing how the system would classify the Saints Battle Group in the battle group interface.

It was his first time possibly having a fledgling Battle Group recognized by the system.

Chapter 895: National Church Conflicts

The Saints Battle Group is currently one of the nine founding groups of the Empire.

This group is always closely tied to religion. Currently, the most widespread text in the Empire, regarded as the Bible by the National Church, the "Emperor's Holy Words Record", was recorded, created, and interpreted by the Father of Genetics of the Saints Battle Group, Son of God.

Ten thousand years ago, after the Emperor ascended, during the civil war that decided the future fate of the Empire, the Saints Legion was a supporter of the loyalists. They have always prided themselves as the most steadfast followers of the Emperor's will, worshiping the Emperor as a god, following his will, and firmly believing that the Empire should be governed by mortals themselves.

After the civil war ended, the Saints Legion also accepted the "Star Warrior Codex" written by the Son of God, Robert, and split up.

After the split, their scale was not as large as the Infinite Corps, but still, in the Empire, they were the group with the second-most sub-groups.

Besides them, there is the Punisher Legion, which has about the same number of sub-groups as the Saints. The Golden Knights rank fourth. Combined, these four families account for about seventy percent of all Empire battle groups' sub-groups. The remaining five groups together account for less than thirty percent.

And the Saints, including the sub-groups of the Saints, have several significant characteristics.

They are fanatic religious followers, closely linked to the National Church. It is rare for Interstellar Warriors to be canonized as 'Living Saints' by the National Church, but nearly 80% of the Saints' Battle Group Leaders are. The remaining 20% have a bad or even poor relationship with the National Church, but nonetheless, after their deaths, they are conferred posthumously.

The Saints and their sub-groups also always fight for the interests of the National Church; conversely, the National Church always provides support to the Saints and their sub-groups.

The Saints Battle Group is also the friendliest towards mortals among all the battle groups.

Except, their friendliness comes with conditions.

This group is quite persistent in proselytizing. It is said that during the Great Expedition when the Empire was founded, the Saints Battle Group was so obsessed with proselytizing that the expedition's progress fell short of expectations, and they were rebuked by the Emperor. Later, they understood that fighting for God was the best way to spread faith, and thus they courageously moved forward.

So, when facing mortals, it depends on whether the opposing party is a believer. If they are believers of the National Church, believing in the Divine Emperor, the Saints will be relatively friendly; the more devout, the friendlier.

But if they are not believers, then the Saints' coldness is not just simple indifference. They believe that all humans in the Empire should be believers of the Divine Emperor, and those who do not believe are seen as heretics.

However, different Saint sub-groups have somewhat different attitudes toward this aspect.

Using the Saints as a benchmark, they are considered neutral: they have requirements for faith in the National Church, but it does not matter which sect is believed in, as long as it does not alter, distort, or even abandon the "Emperor's Holy Words Record", it is acceptable; if they are latent believers, they do not bother, at most being indifferent; regarding the Sect of Mechanics, they show respect, as long as their deity, the God of All Machines, is also the Emperor, it's not a significant problem. Non-believers, however, are well-guided, preached to, and if they still do not listen, they are considered obstinate enemies deserving of physical extermination.

Hmm... this is the middle tier. Fortunately, within the Empire, those who do not believe in the National Church or the Divine Emperor are very few. After all, they are at most indifferent to superficial believers. If one indeed encounters them... just a little pretense will do, generally, the Saints cannot be bothered to quibble with mortals. If they refuse to pretend at all and stubbornly stand their ground, it is assumed they do not want to live.

Using them as a standard, some sub-groups are more 'enlightened' than the Saints. Their ties with the National Church are particularly less, appearing more like ordinary battle groups, but especially devout and fond of proselytizing, yet not fanatical, not interfering much with the outside world, mainly focusing on self-devotion.

There are also more fanatical ones that pursue proselytizing daily or cleanse heretics, engaging in many actions within the Empire that could be considered outrageous and widely criticized.

Other types include those with a particularly close relationship with the National Church, almost to the point of being considered its lackeys.

With a considerable number of sub-groups under the Saints, naturally all types are present.

No matter the type, they share one inescapable trait: religious belief.

Whether it is fanaticism or self-disciplinary practice, or a deep relationship with the National Church, they are all specific manifestations based on this religious foundation.

This is something that is hard to avoid, even in a newly expanded battle group using the genetic seed quota of the Alliance leveraging the Saints.

It seems that this is something ingrained in their genes.

This is the greatest difficulty in integrating the Saints Battle Group into the Alliance.

Gu Hang originally thought that after signing a series of cooperation agreements, the Saints would already be in hand.

But in reality, the Saints did not appear in the battle group interface.

Clearly, just signing agreements, with the Saints Battle Group following the Alliance's command militarily, is not enough for the system to recognize.

The independence of the Saints is still very high.

Politically, they are in a cooperative relationship with the Alliance;

Economically and in terms of self-development, they are still the masters of the Mercifat Star Domain, different from those miserable battle groups reclaimed by the Alliance. The Mercifat Star Domain was swiftly regained by the Saints after the Catastrophe Era and can still stably provide resources for the battle group. Whether it is replenishing troops or obtaining equipment, they can obtain from the local area, and their demand from the Alliance is not particularly high.

Chapter 895: National Church Conflict (Part 2)

Their current cooperation with the Alliance is essentially based on interests. Whether it's for the benefit of the battle group itself or for the overall interests of the Empire and humanity as a race, closely collaborating with the Alliance and joining their expedition is the most valuable thing.

But this does not mean they have become part of the Alliance.

This can be seen from the system as well. They don't appear in the battle group interface but rather in the allies list of the Alliance.

Gu Hang is still somewhat patient about this.

He doesn't necessarily need to acquire the Saints right now, immediately.

But he has a series of plans to slowly advance.

The core point of entry is religion, where the value differences between the two sides are the greatest.

The Alliance also has a National Church belief, but it is quite suppressed.

Or rather than saying 'suppression', it might be better to say 'transformation'.

Within the Alliance, they call this system 'New Teaching'.

It still follows the "Emperor's Holy Words Record", but it mainly emphasizes the positive moral qualities such as leading people to be good, calling for unity, dedication, and contribution... It weakens some of

the ritualistic and extreme parts of religion, dissolves the organizational degree of religious groups, and confines religion to the scope of religion, ideology, and community service, thus weakening its influence on society.

Are these heresies?

But they're not heretical, they even adhere to the original teachings of the Holy Words, discarding many of the so-called Saints and theologians' later additions, various other religious scriptures, and interpretations of the Holy Words.

The core conflict among the various sects of the National Church is about the right to interpret doctrine. To have the interpretation right is to have more influence, thereby gaining greater divine power, and then secular power.

What the Alliance did was cut out that part of the interpretation right. The interpretation right is only with the Alliance officials and the New Teaching. And the Alliance officials and the New Teaching only recognize the "Emperor's Holy Words Record".

To be honest, the National Church forces are generally dissatisfied with this — it's like taking away their political life!

However, it's hard to say this openly.

What political life should religious groups have?

This is a lesson left from the era of apostasy, which the Empire's laws have direct stipulations on. Nowadays, many actions of the National Church, strictly speaking, are pushing the boundaries.

Unable to publicly use this reason, the critique of the New Teaching would say it is heretical. But this essentially circles back to competing for the right of interpretation, thereby competing for influence, divine power, and secular power.

This is also the most skilled strategy of the National Church.

But within the areas controlled by the Alliance, this strategy fails.

It's quite challenging to contest the interpretation rights of the New Teaching, as they adhere strictly to the Holy Words, and there are numerous New Teaching priests and fathers cultivated from the Alliance's Divinity School to help refute. The Alliance's Divinity School is something Gu Hang exchanged with Gift Points, quite similar in nature to the Loyal Heir Academy, and the priests trained there are quite competent.

Moreover, Gu Hang has often used Gift Points to enlighten and upgrade religious talents.

When it comes to debating doctrine, they don't have much of an advantage, so don't even think about competing in other areas.

The Alliance's official laws favor the New Teaching; the Alliance's military is strong enough to suppress uprisings; the Alliance's administrative measures have strengthened grassroots control, facilitating the spread of the New Teaching and making it inconvenient for traditional National Church sects.

With such a dynamic equilibrium, religious issues within the Alliance's territory are controllable.

And this system, under Gu Hang's direction, was soon also applied to the Star Domain of Mercifat.

After the war in the Seven Star Corridor had stabilized, the Western Expedition Army gathered three vanguard fleets to enter Mercifat.

Under the framework agreement signed with the Saints, the Alliance quickly gained a significant degree of administrative power over the Mercifat Star Domain.

Subsequently, as the Alliance's army, together with the Saints Battle Group, numerous Saint subgroups, and the Holy War Army, began their journey beyond Mercifat Star Domain, the Alliance also started the economic, political, and religious development of Mercifat.

Economic development posed no issue, and proceeded smoothly.

Investment was very welcome.

However, the Alliance's economic system differs from that of Mercifat's original system.

The style of the Saints Battle Group indicates what kind of situation the Mercifat Star Domain is in—hundreds of worlds here, in a way, are all religious worlds. Their characteristic lies in the combination of church and state, where divine power guides political power.

And these aspects must be changed.

To facilitate economic investment, political construction naturally had to keep pace.

At this point, many conflicts began to emerge.

But they were still acceptable, at least when the two sides were generally still in a honeymoon phase, making coordination relatively easy.

However, as the Alliance New Teaching began to integrate alongside the economic and political reforms, conflicts started to sharpen.

Many conflicts reached the ears of Raymond Vis on the front lines.

To be honest, upon receiving this news, his feelings were very complicated.

On one hand, he did not want to disrupt the cooperation between the Saints and the Alliance.

After leaving his homeland, he realized that the entire Empire was already on the brink of collapse. His previous disappointment with Holy Terra was entirely justified. Because of this, he further realized that following the steps of the Alliance, and following the instructions of High Lord Gu Hang, was the correct path to save the Empire.

But at the same time, what the Alliance New Teaching was doing in Mercifat indeed made him uncomfortable.

With a contradictory mindset, all he could do was continually put a facade, striving to mediate relations between the two sides—aided mainly by calming his own people.

The bishops and clergy who rule the many worlds of the Mercifat Star Domain, their political lives were dying a slow death.

Not finding support from Raymond Vis, some began to take desperate risks.

A significant rebellion erupted in Mercifat—of course, according to the rebels, they were engaging in a 'holy war', expelling heresy, and restoring the holiness of the Mercifat Star Domain.

The rebellion was, of course, eventually suppressed.

However, the impact of this event was profound.

Among those involved in the rebellion, many were indeed Raymond Vis's own people.

Within the battle group, many different voices began to surface.

Raymond Vis finally could no longer keep up the facade.

The conflicts had become so apparent that they could no longer be ignored.

He needed to have a conversation with Gu Hang.

And this conversation was exactly what Gu Hang had been anticipating.

From the emergence of religious conflicts, to their intensification, to rebellion, to the change in Raymond Vis's mindset, all of this was what Gu Hang hoped to see.

How can real change occur without bringing these issues to the forefront?

Chapter 896

The True Word is the Glory Queen Battleship of the Saints Battle Group.

Inside its meditative chamber, Raymond Vis sat in his designated seat, his expression solemn.

The application for communication with Gu Hang, submitted to the Alliance's top echelon, had already been approved.

Arriving two hours earlier than the agreed-upon time, Raymond Vis had been in deep thought. His fingers, freed from the Power Armor gloves, rubbed against the rough scripture carvings until they bled.

He pondered for a long time, until the corners of the chamber hummed with the holoprojector, and the projection of Gu Hang gradually took shape, pulling him back to reality.

"Percy Remonvis, hello," Gu Hang greeted, his attitude fairly cordial and friendly.

However, right after the greeting, the second sentence immediately delved into the main topic.

"I heard you personally executed three Star Sector bishops?"

"They orchestrated charges of heresy and manipulated the results. Frenzied congregants used Holy Oil to incinerate New Teaching's mission station." The Living Saint's shoulder armor reflected the red glow of the skull candlestick, but his voice was more elusive than the candlelight. "So, I bestowed upon them the Emperor's mercy."

"Mercy? Ha!" Gu Hang sneered, "During the gathering, you burned seventy-two priests of the New Teaching and over three thousand congregants. The Holy War Army blocked the doors, forcing anyone trying to escape back inside. Right in front of the Emperor Divine Statue, the Divine Emperor's followers were burned alive by raging fires. It's said that even the supposedly invincible Emperor Divine Statue crumbled in this tragic disaster.

"Even the Divine Emperor didn't want to witness that scene himself."

"And the result? They were still deemed worthy of mercy!"

"Just an execution, and post-execution, the charges were not publicly announced. Their bodies could still be buried within the temple, receiving secret worship and homage..."

Raymond Vis remained silent for a long time before finally speaking, struggling with his words: "That wasn't my intent. I will order a thorough investigation to find out who, after the execution, didn't follow the rightful directives and shielded the traitors' forces instead."

Gu Hang's projection stepped forward, the Alliance emblem on his epaulet suddenly glaringly bright: "Is there even a need to investigate? Even I know who's behind it all — the Cardinal Council of the Mercifat faction, twelve millennial family theologians, and..."

He intentionally elongated his speech at the end, forcing Raymond Vis to say it himself.

"And the warriors I personally brought forth." Raymond Vis suddenly stood, his Holy Sword at his waist flicking out half an inch with the motion, "But is this an unforgivable crime? They're practicing their faith, New Teaching... the Alliance's New Teaching..."

Gnashing his teeth, he still finished his sentence, even at the risk of angering Gu Hang: "The Alliance's New Teaching — isn't it the heretical doctrine crafted by you to seize power from the National Church? We've already done our best to balance by allowing the spread of New Teaching. Do you aim to annihilate our faith in the Emperor?"

Gu Hang was not angry.

He merely shook his head slightly, saying: "Don’t compare yourself to those hopeless people. Remember Emperor’s Holy Words Record, Chapter Seven, Verse Two..."

Gu Hang’s projection suddenly approached, the shadow behind him morphing into a giant scroll of scriptures, "The adherents shall practice their words and bear witness to the doctrine with their lives."

Raymond Vis fully understood what Gu Hang was about to say next, his expression unchanged by the spectacle.

Watching him, Gu Hang paused in his speech.

His theological knowledge... is what it is. Debating scripture with a Living Saint like Raymond Vis is not his strong suit.

So, he turned the conversation towards historical events.

And specifically, recent history.

"On Valley Star, the Seven Star Corridor has been reclaimed, the war has ended, and New Teaching has arranged Nagor vaccines, transported in bulk to Valley Star, contributing to the recovery of the planet’s agricultural regions, preventing residual plague impact..."

"The Mercifat faction absurdly regards them as impure creations. Not only do they obstruct the distribution and administration of vaccines, but they also insist on executing all civilians who receive the Nagor vaccine. Consequently, the plague broke out on a massive scale, and the ’Plague Apocalypse Knight Order’ fought their way through six Nest Capitals along the route of the penitence parade."

"The plague caused a reduction in Valley Star’s production, while New Teaching’s agricultural ships were deployed to Valley Star, equipped with the latest ecological farm components, yet were obstructed by saints warriors guarding the starport, preventing ships from docking."

"Your offspring preferred to watch countless people on the planet starve in barren fields rather than let New Teaching’s agricultural ships dock at the orbital port."

"When they crushed grain transport ships with endless scrolls, they were trampling upon the true will of the Emperor!"

Raymond Vis couldn't help but speak out, his voice rising like a dying Thunderhawk gunship making its final dive: "But New Teaching priests tore apart the 'Saints' Prayer'! They removed the gratitude rituals during sermons!"

This was a critical manifestation of the conflict.

What is the 'Saints' Prayer'? It's a religious scripture written by a Battle Group Leader who's had a profound influence on the National Church and the Saints Battle Group four thousand years ago. Its impact is immense, making it practically the mainstream scripture of the Empire today.

The so-called Mercifat faction primarily adheres to the 'Saints' Prayer'; every member of the Saints Battle Group, besides being warriors, is a staunch monk, and they naturally insist on this scripture as well. Essentially, the Mercifat faction is the most direct inheritor and propagator of the religious philosophy of the Saints Battle Group.

Chapter 896_2

The conflict between the two sides lies in that the New Teaching doesn't acknowledge anything other than the "Emperor's Holy Words Record." This is a struggle for the power to interpret scriptures. It's not that simple to dismiss the "Saints Prayers," which has already gained substantial influence.

"Faith should not be a chain. Whether it's the Sect of Mechanics or the National Church, they are the same. Using doctrine to hijack productivity, squeezing the last of the food for confession tickets, the so-called faith becomes poison. Are certain things truly for faith, for the Divine Emperor, for the Empire, for humanity, or because of certain prejudices, stubbornness, or even entangled interests? I believe you can see it clearly."

"The Alliance's religion is free, not only the New Teaching can exist. The 'Saints Prayers' is not wrong, but no scripture can surpass the 'Emperor's Holy Words Record' in doctrinal grandeur. Similarly, nothing surpasses the welfare of the entire Human Empire."

The Battle Group Leader’s fingers deeply embedded in the scripture relief, blood flowed down the engraving "Thou shalt not take the name of the God in vain."

Gu Hang’s voice stirred up in his mind memories he thought he had long since forgotten, from hundreds of years ago, back in his youth. He was not even an Interstellar Warrior yet, golden waves of wheat swayed in his hometown, his mortal father was a farmer, and he didn’t have much thought at that time, simply moved by the scent of wheat wafting during harvest season and the smiles on his uncles’ faces.

Looking at the full granary, the smiling faces turning with the windmill, does it indeed reflect the Emperor’s benevolence more closely than the moldy sacramental bread?

He didn’t know why he suddenly recalled these memories; in his life spanning hundreds of years, events from before he turned fifteen occupy only three percent of his life. He thought he had long forgotten those insignificant memories, but suddenly, they surfaced at this moment.

"Then what do you want us to do?! Should the Saints Battle Group betray millennia-old tradition? To be like those wavering sub-groups, letting mortals strip away our traditions?"

His voice grew more agitated.

But Gu Hang actually felt that at this moment, Raymond Vis’s agitated state was a good sign.

Gu Hang gently uttered a sentence:

"I want you to become true saints."

"The Battle Group requires cleansing," Raymond Vis raised his head, his mask covered in frost, "but how am I to convince the Battle Group?"

"Is persuasion necessary?" Gu Hang countered, "No one needs convincing. Those who conform are loyal; those who oppose are traitors, simply put."

"Give me seventy-two hours."

He reached a significant decision.

Gu Hang finally smiled.

"If you require any assistance, feel free to speak with Marshal Yan Fangxu. The entire power of the Western Expedition Army will be your staunchest support. Some confessional chambers need complete purification to make the saints truly pure."

...

Gu Hang did not pay attention to how the Saints Battle Group carried out the bloody cleansing that lasted for seventy-two hours internally.

He only cared whether this matter could be accomplished.

Raymond Vis's final agreement to conduct a cleansing within the Battle Group had some influence from his conversation with Gu Hang but was by no means the crucial factor.

Essentially, it was because he chose to maintain cooperation benefits with the Alliance between the conservative faction within the Battle Group and the interests of the Mercifat sect.

This choice, rationally speaking, was absolutely correct.

The advantages of cooperating with the Alliance were already beyond need for advertisement or explanation. Before the Alliance arrived, the Saints were barely holding on to the Seven Star Corridor; after the Alliance came, the corridor faced no pressure, fully equipped, the forces moved to the front line, engaging in even greater endeavors...

The disadvantages of not cooperating with the Alliance? Just like now, the Saints have no room for regret.

The Saints along with their sub-groups and the Holy War Army have fully integrated into the Alliance's military command sequence; administratively, the Alliance is also taking over the Mercifat Star Domain.

At this moment, saying you'd stop or withdraw from cooperation, what does that mean?

That means traitors.

Does the Alliance talk softly?

If it talks softly, why then along this long path through numerous Cosmos Domains, Star Domains, and worlds, not one acquired place does not join the Dark Side Expedition or refuse the Alliance's jurisdiction?

Gu Hang has never issued any threats, but Raymond Vis must understand.

If it truly reaches that stage, there might be no way to salvage it.

Yet this is speaking from a rational perspective about weighing the pros and cons.

But in truth, it's merely the facade.

If it's merely about benefits, it's not enough to compel the Saints to act.

Are Saints afraid of death?

If it merely concerns benefits or threatens life, then Saints and even Raymond Vis himself would not fear perishing, sacrificing life to uphold faith.

If probing deeper, it's actually a test for the Saints: their so-called faith, is it really 'creed, doctrine, scripture,' or rather 'Empire supreme, humanity supreme'?

Which does their devotion to the Emperor's faith prioritize?

Some conservatives within the Saints Battle Group and followers of the Mercifat sect chose the former. They've thought this way and acted this way for hundreds of years, never believing there's a conflict between the former and the latter.

Yet Raymond Vis sees at this moment's grand environment, there is indeed conflict between the two. Gu Hang, Alliance, and Dark Side Expedition represent prioritizing the latter. When a choice between the two is necessary, which path should Saints choose?

He is visibly different from the conservatives within the Battle Group. He is, clearly, a supporter of the latter.

This is what drove him, upon encountering the Alliance and realizing the Alliance's strength and code of conduct, to swiftly reach a cooperation with them; likewise, when the Battle Group's religious beliefs clashed with the Alliance, despite immense internal pain, he would rather choose to turn the blade inward for self-cleansing to preserve collaboration with the Alliance.

However, this decision remains incredibly difficult to make. Before his conversation with Gu Hang, Raymond Vis harbored some wishful thinking, wondering if there was room for compromise, if a better, more mutually favorable solution existed.

Gu Hang's intention clearly shattered his wishful thinking and illusions, helping him to finalize his determination.

Once the seventy-two hours promised by the Saints Battle Group Leader passed, two detailed reports were presented before Gu Hang.

One from Raymond Vis's self-report.

The other originating from the Alliance Military Intelligence Bureau's investigation report on this internal cleansing among the saints. They watched coldly from the sidelines throughout, even providing much support to Raymond Vis, ensuring that some who might have escaped or gone into hiding met their rightful fate.

Chapter 897

The Saints Battle Group, as a founding warband, was finally taken by Gu Hang.

After the great purge, they had already appeared on the list.

And the benefits brought by the founding warband were indeed as Gu Hang had expected, far greater than those of an ordinary warband.

It directly opened a branch page: Legion!

The first point is reflected in the quota of genetic seeds.

Fifty thousand!

When Gu Hang first saw this number, he was a bit stunned.

No wonder it's called a legion.

If all fifty thousand interstellar warriors are fully recruited, wouldn't that be equivalent to an interstellar soldier corps from the era of the Empire's great expedition before the implementation of the 'Star Warrior Codex'?

However, upon closer inspection, there are still some limitations.

This fifty thousand is limited to all the Saints' bloodline.

This means, after collecting the Saints, this founding warband, collecting other sub-groups no longer holds much significance.

So far, the Alliance has a hundred warbands under its command. Among them, the number of Saints' sub-groups is the second-largest, only after the Infinite Sub-group, with eighteen.

Decades ago, when the Saints Battle Group decided to shoulder the responsibility of guarding the Seven Star Corridor, they were not fighting alone but issued a call. Ten of the Saints' sub-groups responded to the mother group's call and came to Mercifat. Additionally, there were originally four Saints' sub-groups in the Mercifat Star Domain. Counting the Saints themselves, a total of fifteen warbands were here.

Now, all have 'submitted' to Gu Hang at once, plus the eighteen Saints' sub-groups previously conquered, bringing the total number of the Saints lineage warbands to 33, becoming the largest in the entire Alliance.

However, this no longer matters. No matter how many there are, the total number of interstellar warriors of the Saints' bloodline remains fixed at this scale of fifty thousand.

The number fifty thousand does not actually reach the scale of the Saints during the great expedition era when the empire was founded. At that time, their total number should have exceeded 200,000.

This caused some discontent for Gu Hang.

Why not give me 200,000? When the legion was at its peak, they had that many!

But then again, it was because they originally had a large population. Some groups have pitifully small numbers.

If it's a fixed quota of fifty thousand, it's not unacceptable. In the future, resorting to warbands like the Blood Angels, Phoenix—known for their exceptional individual prowess albeit smaller numbers—could well compensate.

Besides, having a current capacity of fifty thousand is strong enough.

With the Saints alone, Gu Hang can gather 50,000, plus a total of 88 other warbands, completing a total of 138,000 interstellar warriors!

This is definitely an interstellar soldier corps during the great expedition period!

Moreover, beyond the quota of fifty thousand, taking down the founding warband has another benefit: after full recruitment, each time a 'Inheritance Seed' is used to培养 produce a new warrior, this warrior will be counted towards the total seed quota!

This means the quota of fifty thousand is not the ultimate limit but will continue to grow!

Each interstellar warrior will 'produce' two genetic seeds throughout their life.

The first seed is known as the 'new seed', obtainable five years after they become an interstellar warrior. The other, taken upon their death, is called the 'Inheritance Seed'.

The second one should have been implanted into their body at the very beginning and constantly supported them in battle. It even contains some fragments of the interstellar warrior's long years—mainly concerning knowledge, skills, training, command, etc.

According to general understanding, a new recruit bred with such an inheritance seed will inherit many attributes of the genetic seed, becoming more talented and easily mastering the techniques and content inscribed within, even achieving mastery without a teacher.

The two types of seeds are distinguished.

If successfully培养條 with an inheritance seed, does it increase the quota by one?

Converting this into a tangible context, it means that once the quota of 50,000 Saints is filled, every veteran who dies after over five years of service—in the case that their genetic seed is successfully retrieved and a new warrior cultivated using that seed—would mean an increment of one in the total quota?

The prerequisites seem quite stringent.

Five years of service, a battle death, successful seed retrieval...compiled, this probability might aggregate to around 30-40%. And this ratio is actually the eligible to total decedent count ratio. Although some derogatorily nickname them oversized grunts, interstellar warriors have low mortality in ordinary wars.

Besides, even in doomsday-level battles, sustaining losses of hundreds or thousands of interstellar warriors is a serious affair.

Additionally, with the long lifespan of interstellar warriors, the thresholds are relatively challenging to fulfill, hence a slower growth rate.

But there's no concern; this is ultimately good news.

Under the new legion system, Gu Hang can reliably command fifty thousand Saints warriors to fight for him. Their numbers can be swiftly replenished after casualties, and this figure will remain sustainably growing. The further time progresses, the larger this number will become.

Moreover, if there truly are fifty thousand Saints, and Gu Hang swiftly exchanges for all the genetic seeds to make up the shortage, this inherently growing number will naturally increase the Saints' total count to approximately 70,000 after five years—new warriors will generate new seeds after five years.

Chapter 897:

This would cause the total number of Saints to exceed the limit of fifty thousand, meaning Gu Hang cannot replace the seeds until the number of Saint warriors drops below fifty thousand.

But what does it matter? By then, seventy thousand warriors will be enough. Besides, new ones can always be upgraded.

Once the scale is up, the speed at which Interstellar Warriors increase isn't actually that slow.

Of course, it needs to be well-managed.

In the past, Interstellar Warriors during the era of legions didn't have any systems to use. They gradually managed and developed, and it grew to a scale of two hundred thousand, even to the Infinite Legion's peak of three hundred and fifty thousand.

Some legions gradually became sparse in numbers, Gu Hang believed the main issue was with those legions themselves.

Either their commander, Son of God, was reckless, focusing on expeditions, seeking glory, charging aggressively, leading to significant casualties and difficulty in replenishment;

Or the genetic seed compatibility was too low, directly reflected in a significant drop in the success rate of genetic seed implantation surgery;

Or the legion was only good at fighting wars, not so much at development.

Oh, it's also possible they have all three issues or two of them.

The Bat Legion has all three; the Blood Angels have the latter two; the Death Angels have the first two... in any case, they have some issues.

While the populous Infinite Legion and Saints Legion don't possess any of these issues. Their genetic seed compatibility is high, their Son of God doesn't crazily lead them into constant blood battles, and they are good at management and development. The Infinite Legion has managed its five hundred worlds prosperously, still being one of the wealthiest places in the Empire. The Saints may not be as politically and economically savvy, but their religious construction and management have their unique features, with Mercifat once supporting their vast legion numbers.

They can manage well, and Gu Hang, having such a strong foundation with an entire Alliance as backing, what's there he can't manage?

Under this thinking, the system's provision of genetic seed exchange quantity seems more like a bottom-line mechanism.

If worst-case scenario, the legion suffered a devastating blow, then Gu Hang could spend Gift Points to quickly recruit forces, raising them to a basic line.

The resurgence would happen quickly.

But as long as he doesn't bring things to that point, by maintaining normal operations, the lower limit of the bottom-line mechanism would raise, and at the same time, the upper limit brought by normal operations could be very high.

...

After reaching an agreement with Gu Hang, Raymond Vis even accepted the future supplement of new blood for the Saints from the Alliance's Interstellar Warrior Training Center.

Of course, they also made requests: the Alliance still needs to respect the tradition of the battle groups.

Gu Hang instantly agreed to this.

According to the regulations of the Interstellar Warrior Management Association, the battle groups inherently have the right to propose requirements for new recruits to the New Blood Cultivation Center based on their needs.

These requirements generally aren't related to strength. After all, the new blood produced by the cultivation centers are all quite excellent.

Mainly, it's on cultural and background aspects. They might propose requirements like new blood must come from their home planet, be well-versed in battle group culture and history, comes from farmer families/Hunter families/noble descendants/ancestors served in military/orphans...

Even, most excessively, not only should the recruits be from their home planet, but the cultivation center must set up a branch on their home planet for the entire training process.

Of course, the management bureau can't unconditionally compromise and agree to anything, it mainly depends on negotiations.

But generally speaking, allowing battle groups to 'customize' new recruits greatly helps the Alliance when recapturing battle groups during the Dark Side Expedition and incorporating them.

And once incorporated, Gu Hang directly gains two thousand genetic seed slots. Leaving aside the thousand slots occupied by the incorporated battle groups, Gu Hang directly gets an extra thousand seed slots, equating to an additional battle group.

This newly formed battle group wouldn't have any stipulations or demands.

Moreover, even if those incorporated battle groups have many stipulations, so what?

Battle groups can make demands on the New Blood Cultivation Center, that's true, but there's an unconditional, non-negotiable baseline: the training center must have a corresponding Loyal Heir Academy, and all Interstellar Warrior new blood must undergo training in the Loyal Heir Academy.

Essentially, this is Gu Hang spending Gift Points to train these Interstellar Warriors into commissars to ensure their loyalty.

Over time, as the proportion of new blood trained in the Loyal Heir Academy in these recaptured battle groups reaches a certain level, the group's overall transformation and potential betrayal becomes obvious.

The same applies to the Saints.

As expected, Raymond Vis proposed many conditions for the Alliance nurturing new blood for them.

Gu Hang fully agreed to them.

A new Interstellar Warrior Training Center was established on True Word Star; the entire training process is conducted openly and transparently on True Word Star, with high willingness to employ veteran Saints Battle Group members as instructors.

The majority of new blood born from this cultivation center is selected from believer families on True Word Star. They mostly join the Saints Battle Group.

Another portion is recruited from other places within Mercifat Star Domain; they supplement into affiliated divisions of the Saints.

Of course, they are all not at full capacity.

When they arrived, they were incomplete, let alone after experiencing decades of brutal warfare.

After decades of fighting, although new recruits kept being summoned and replenished into various battle groups, in reality, recruitment couldn't keep up with the speed of consumption.

This is why, eventually and upon recapture, Gu Hang directly gains two thousand genetic seed slots. Leaving aside the thousand slots occupied by the recaptured battle groups, Gu Hang directly gets an extra thousand seed slots, equating to an additional battle group.

This newly formed battle group wouldn't have any stipulations or demands.

Moreover, even if those recaptured battle groups have many stipulations, so what?

Battle groups can make demands on the New Blood Cultivation Center, that's true, but there's an unconditional, non-negotiable baseline: the training center must have a corresponding Loyal Heir Academy, and all Interstellar Warrior new blood must undergo training in the Loyal Heir Academy.

Essentially, this is Gu Hang spending Gift Points to train these Interstellar Warriors into commissars to ensure their loyalty.

Over time, as the proportion of new blood trained in the Loyal Heir Academy in these recaptured battle groups reaches a certain level, the group's overall transformation and potential betrayal becomes obvious.

The same applies to the Saints.

As expected, Raymond Vis proposed many conditions for the Alliance nurturing new blood for them.

Gu Hang fully agreed to them.

A new Interstellar Warrior Training Center was established on True Word Star; the entire training process is conducted openly and transparently on True Word Star, with high willingness to employ veteran Saints Battle Group members as instructors.

The majority of new blood born from this cultivation center is selected from believer families on True Word Star. They mostly join the Saints Battle Group.

Another portion is recruited from other places within Mercifat Star Domain; they supplement into affiliated divisions of the Saints.

Of course, they are all not at full capacity.

When they arrived, they were incomplete, let alone after experiencing decades of brutal warfare.

After decades of fighting, although new recruits kept being summoned and replenished into various battle groups, in reality, recruitment couldn't keep up with the speed of consumption.

This is why, eventually

Chapter 898:

The orbital defense platform of Chi Yao IV melted into molten iron under the chaotic flames of subspace, and Raymond Vis gazed through the porthole as the Empire’s last line of defense collapsed under the green-skin horde. The gaps in his power armor seeped with dry bloodstains from thirty years ago, and the spiritual glow of the Holy Sword "Dawn’s Retribution" had dimmed like a candle in the wind.

"Battle Group Leader! The void shield array of Chi Yao III has overloaded!" The communicator screeched with the raspy yell of Colonel San, the background echoing with deafening explosions. "Those green-skins... they’ve transformed the wreckage of dead starships into collision devices!"

Raymond Vis’s fingers dug deeply into the fine gold armrests of his command throne. His retina reflected tactical holograms—the blue dots representing the Saints Battle Group were being swallowed by a crimson tide. The formation of the Third Grand Company was fragmented by the boarding pods of the Bone Clan, while the plasma turrets of the orbital defense array were detonating in succession from overclocking.

His gaze swept over the corner of the bridge where servitors were curled up, the data interfaces at the back of those semi-mechanical beings still plugged into encrypted notes from thirty years ago. The reinforcements promised by Holy Terra never materialized, and today they had to scrupulously calculate the fuel for their last three Thunderhawk gunships.

"Send the Penitent up." The Battle Group Leader’s hoarse voice startled the mechanical raven on his shoulder armor. "Use the Light Spear Array to clear an evacuation path, and tell the children of the Seventh Company... prepare for glorious sacrifice."

When purple-red subspace rifts bloomed at the northern end of the star domain, Raymond Vis thought it was another new Chaos Fleet. But when the silver-gray Crazy Shark-class destroyers tore through the veil of reality, the winged Tianma emblem on the prow of the ship made the old Battle Group Leader’s mechanical eyes suddenly leak lubricant—for the first time in thirty years, he saw a new warship that didn’t belong to scrapped metal.

"This is the Alliance Western Expedition Army’s vanguard fleet." The full-spectrum broadcast carried reassuring electronic static. "Marshal Yan Fangxu salutes the defenders. Orbital bombardment will cover the enemy’s vanguard in twenty seconds, please adjust your shield frequencies accordingly."

Raymond Vis watched as golden markers suddenly lit up on the tactical star chart. Seventy teleport beacons illuminated throughout the battlefield, precisely marking the weak gravitational points of the green-skin war moons. When the first new whirlwind torpedo penetrated the Bone Clan's flagship reactor, the gamma rays from the explosion outlined the silhouette of the Emperor's Sky Eagle in the void.

The next seventy-two hours became an unforgettable miracle for the Saints. Yan Fangxu's staff reconstructed thirty years of war data using a holographic sand table, while the Alliance's engineering troops, deploying their mobile foundry ship at the battlefield's edge, spewed creations of black box technology. When Raymond Vis set foot on the surface of Chi Yao II, he crushed not only the skulls of green-skin youths but also the despair accumulated over thirty years.

"Your Dreadnought Mechs need neuro sync rate calibration." The Alliance's technical priest handed a data pad to the saintly sergeant covered in gunpowder smoke. "We've brought brainwave amplifiers compatible with the Holy Blood model, but..." He hesitated, glancing at the Titan Legion assembling in the distance. "The Battle Group Leader might be more interested in the deployment plan of those Emperor-class Titans."

In the meditation hall of the Penitent, Raymond Vis saw a living war miracle for the first time. Yan Fangxu's command deck hovered with three hundred holographic tactical nodes, each pulsating with the ancient battle codes of different battle groups. When the marshal's mechanical limbs swept through the star domain projection, the scars from thirty years of hard fighting by the Saints were woven into a precise map of weak points by data streams.

"Your battle group's sacrifice at Chi Yao IV helped us lock onto the genetic mutation frequency of the Bone Clan." Yan Fangxu pulled up the dissection image of green-skin corpses, with the Alliance's red markers dancing in the DNA spiral. "These spores have been tagged by genetic lock weapons, next contact..."

The Battle Group Leader suddenly pressed against the Marshal's wrist, the servo motors of the power armor emitting an overwhelmed hum. His gaze pierced through the holographic projection, landing on the Celestial Horse Main Battle Ship sailing slowly outside the porthole. That warship, equipped with a new Light Spear Array, was precisely the "future fleet" Holy Terra had promised thirty years ago.

"Tell me the truth." The metal tremor in his voice was captured by Raymond Vis's voiceline sensor. "How do you handle the Sect of Mechanics temples in the occupation zones? How do you deal with planetary governors unwilling to relinquish feudal rights?" His Holy Sword suddenly glowed with a faint gleam,

illuminating the pile of encrypted communication boxes in the corner of the command room—each imprinted with the fire wax seal of the High Lord Council.

Yan Fangxu's electronic eyes flickered three times, pulling up a holographic record of Gu Hang's speech on Dragon Abyss Star. "The Commander-in-chief said that the Dark Side Expedition is not about destruction but rebirth." In the image, the Alliance leader was handing the planetary governor's scepter to a tearful miner's representative, "What we bring are the new agricultural modules from the Founding World, systems that allow the lower levels of the Nest Capital to breathe clean air..."

When the projection switched to the reconstruction scenes of the Heijian Star, the Saint Battle Group Leader suddenly knelt on one knee. His goggles reflected the purified Chaos altar, where the Alliance's engineering team was pouring the foundation for a school; the Luman Kingdom's palace, which once enslaved millions, now bore the bronze plaque of the Planet Council.

"Seven hours ago, my Chief Pharmacist reported the situation of your medical bay." Yan Fangxu displayed the analysis chart of the Interstellar Warriors' genetic seeds, the mutation index making the Saints gasp. "Black box technology can customize genetic stabilizers, but it requires opening the sacred Holy Blood map."

Raymond Vis felt the thermal systems inside his power armor suddenly fail. His memory chip replayed every scene of sacrifice over the past thirty years—those brothers who self-immolated due to genetic degradation, those companies that went independent to protect civilians, those who slowly decayed while waiting for Terra's reply...

"How much energy is left in Chi Yao VII's orbital defense platform?" The Battle Group Leader suddenly turned to his tactical officer, his voice carrying a wavering tone unheard for thirty years. "Share the star domain gravity well data with Marshal Yan. It's time for the Bone Chief to witness the true wrath of the Emperor."

When the Alliance's Titan Legion crossed the defense line built with skulls by the Saints, Raymond Vis heard rebirth in the war's chimes. Yan Fangxu's staff was regrouping their tactical traditions, and the Black Box Foundry Ship spewed not only weapons but also hope. The old Battle Group Leader stroked the newly issued genetic stabilizer, suddenly reminded of the sunrise during his oath at the Holy Blood Church three hundred years ago.

In the final cleanup battle in the Chi Yao Star System, the Saints Battle Group employed the Alliance's boarding tactic for the first time. When Raymond Vis charged into the green-skin flagship with subspace

disruption grenades gifted by Yan Fangxu, he suddenly glimpsed the future in the explosion’s flash—those worlds once abandoned by Terra, now being reborn under the dark side expedition’s banner. The orbital defense platform of Chi Yao IV melted into molten iron under the chaotic flames of subspace, and Raymond Vis gazed through the porthole as the Empire’s last line of defense collapsed under the green-skin horde. The gaps in his power armor seeped with dry bloodstains from thirty years ago, and the spiritual glow of the Holy Sword "Dawn’s Retribution" had dimmed like a candle in the wind.

"Battle Group Leader! The void shield array of Chi Yao III has overloaded!" The communicator screeched with the raspy yell of Colonel San, the background echoing with deafening explosions. "Those green-skins... they’ve transformed the wreckage of dead starships into collision devices!"

Chapter 898: Legion System

Gu Hang also considered whether opening this Legion Page was actually a loss?

After all, with the number fifty thousand, wouldn’t it suffice to collect just twenty-five original Saints Battle Groups?

In fact, the Alliance already had eighteen Saints Battle Groups before, not counting the extra battle group Gu Hang himself established with the Saints’ bloodline, the original number was nine.

Counting the fifteen in the Mercifat Star Domain, that makes a total of 24, already close to the upper limit.

But in reality, that’s not very feasible.

Gu Hang swallowed the Mercifat Star Domain whole, forcing the Saints Battle Groups to submit, which allowed them to bring back fourteen subgroups. Actually, these fourteen subgroups, reaching late stages, summed up to four to five thousand Interstellar Warriors at most, averaging about three hundred people per group.

If the Saints didn’t accept, these fourteen groups would rather be annihilated than join the Alliance.

If it weren’t for this one-shot deal where the Saints were collectively consumed, the current numbers wouldn’t have been reached.

Moreover, Gu Hang suspects that the total number of a single bloodline, since it can initiate a Legion Page by subduing initial groups, turning into fifty thousand, he estimates that simply collecting subgroups might also have this upper limit. Except, he hadn't encountered it before.

Additionally, Gu Hang discovered another point.

In the Yadan Cosmos Domain, there's an Alliance subgroup from the Saints named Holy Armor Iron Guard. The gene seeds they provide in the system aren't from the Saints, but are labeled as 'Holy Armor Iron Guard'.

This situation isn't new to Gu Hang.

Blood Shark has Blood Shark Seed, Phoenix has Phoenix Seed, and they aren't 'Bat Seeds' or 'Phoenix Seeds'.

Undoubtedly, they are indeed subsidiaries tied to the parent group. However, Gu Hang speculates that over time, due to unique experiences the battle groups encountered, their genetic seeds underwent some mutations, making them slightly different compared to the main group.

You can still see they resemble the original battle group; they are similar upon inspection too.

But they eventually developed distinct traits, leading to system recognition as independent entities.

Such seeds are not subject to the fifty thousand limit of the Legion interface.

Gu Hang even wonders if battle groups developed from these independent genetic seeds, reaching a certain magnitude, could also be acknowledged as a legion?

What's the reason for being recognized as a legion?

For ordinary battle groups, it's the subduing of initial groups.

So, can it be considered that developing a battle group from an independent seed to the level of an initial group, would suffice?

What are the conditions to develop into an initial group level?

The number of Interstellar Warriors cultivated from independent seeds? The current limit is two thousand, requiring a gradual expansion in scale through management?

It's possible, but it's likely to be slow.

Are there other conditions apart from this?

However, this matter is purely Gu Hang's speculation and not necessarily true.

Excluding the independent seeds, there are actually three categories based on the seeds inherited from various legions.

Secondary, Legion, Glory.

This is also one of the benefits Gu Hang gained after opening the Legion Page.

Among the many battle groups the Alliance subdued before, those with gene seeds rated as 'secondary' constitute at least half or even more.

These secondary seeds are most likely due to improper storage, or the inherent qualification of Interstellar Warriors tasked with cultivating genetic seeds was insufficient, or the simplest reason, they were poorly stored for too long... Various issues led to genetic seeds being somewhat degraded.

The proportion reaching 50% is quite exaggerated.

The Empire's management system for genetic seeds, and the cultivation regime for Interstellar Warriors, has always been more defensive than developmental. They can't do away with Interstellar Warriors' power, so they need cultivation, although fearing they become too powerful and leading to rebellion becomes a major issue. The overall policy is a contradiction.

It was precisely in this environment that so many genetic seeds were kept for too long before being utilized. The selection was poor, and battle groups inheriting seeds ended up with secondary seeds.

However, generally speaking, within the Empire, there is no grade division for genetic seeds of Interstellar Warriors. Genetic seeds are crucial assets for battle groups and aren't casually inspected, nor do they have quality levels.

It's just that in Gu Hang's Legion Page, this aspect is entirely visible.

The quality of genetic seeds does not directly determine an Interstellar Warrior's level of power. Excellent seeds can still produce mediocre warriors; secondary seeds can still yield champions.

The primary factor deciding individual skill levels is still the individual's talent and effort.

However, extending the sample to thousands of Interstellar Warriors, the quality effects of genetic seeds become much more evident.

It's directly reflected in the fact that the training success rate for squad champions in secondary seed groups is only around 2% to 3%.

For Legion seeds, which haven't experienced degradation and are theoretically the most common and plentiful seeds, the squad champion training success rate fluctuates between 5% to 10%.

This number compared to 5% to 15% for independent seeds shows independent seeds fluctuate more and have a higher upper limit, but the baseline is similar.

After the submission of the Saints battle groups and the opening of the Legion page, there was an exclusive gene seed exchange—higher grade Glory Seeds.

The total number constitutes one-tenth of the total limit for Saint Gene Seeds.

Gu Hang hasn't tried the effect of these genetic seeds, but there is a real-world battle group for comparative observation—the various initial groups.

The greatest halo on initial groups is undoubtedly the battle group's noble political status, legitimacy, and influence.

Secondly, it's wealth, good equipment.

But besides this, the inherent strength of Interstellar Warriors is not to be underestimated.

The main reason is the superior transmission of their genetic seeds over millennia. At the time of division, only the best warriors stayed with the main group.

Among these initial groups, the proportion of squad champions encompasses 15% to 25%, varying.

Furthermore, the incidence of battle group champions is higher.

These five thousand Glory Seeds are also independent of the fifty thousand seed quota. The remarks on the interface explicitly state they constitute one-tenth of the legion quota.

And on the Legion interface, a new training method for Interstellar Warriors is marked, named: [Blessed Son].

Gu Hang is aware of this.

During the Legion era, the Glory Guard of the Saint Legion's Son of God had the same nature as the Extreme Warrior's [Ever Victorious Army].

Only those trained from Glory Seeds can be trained into [Blessed Son].

Each Blessed Son possesses power comparable to squad champions.

Most importantly, this training does not conflict with the series of trainings like veteran, sergeant, sergeant major, squad champion and can even be compounded!

Chapter 899: Blood Angels' Call for Aid

The training project of the "Blessed Child" can directly use five thousand Glory Seeds to create five thousand elite warriors whose average strength level is just slightly weaker than the company champions.

Then, add to them the regular Interstellar Warrior training project. As long as they reach sergeant level, they can genuinely attain the level of a company champion; reach sergeant major or what they call exemplar-level training, and they'll belong to the upper ranks of company champions.

Adding the training of company champions, they'll absolutely be experts within the company champion ranks, and possibly not much further from battle group champions.

Moreover, Glory-Level Genetic Seeds can achieve a 20% company champion ratio.

That's roughly one thousand company champions at Great Perfection? Or the level close to battle group champions?

Apart from this, Gu Hang still has two strengthening methods.

The technique of Original Casting Interstellar Warrior, Gu Hang has already decided to utilize—it's for the secret formation of the group.

In this case, Gu Hang plans to use those five thousand Glory Seeds along with the Blessed Child's training, and modify them all using the Original Casting technique, then secretly form a new group.

To form a new group, it doesn't necessarily have to be conducted at the cultivation center of the Saint Mother Star - True Word Star.

With the addition of Original Casting technology, those thousand already close to battle group champions might be even closer now?

Even if they're still a bit short, Gu Hang has another strengthening method: Hero Enlightenment.

Further enlightenment, raising the level slightly by one or two levels, to a maximum of three or four levels, should comfortably reach the level of battle group champions?

Although the Blessed Child project has just begun, Gu Hang can still make some estimates based on previous thoughts.

These five thousand Blessed Children, at the weakest, are close to the level of company champions; can train more than three thousand warriors above the middle-upper levels of company champions; produce one thousand at the extreme level close to battle group champions, among which three hundred can become battle group champions easily.

And if some of them have a high rarity of hero, have experienced more over a longer period, they can raise the level to LV7 and above, potentially breaking through to the level of Divine Selection Champions.

Optimistically estimated, might there be ten? Twenty such candidates?

Comparatively speaking, this number is quite terrifying.

During the Omeglia Campaign, though it wasn't the entire force of the Alliance, it was indeed the essence of the Western Expedition Army. Gu Hang personally participated, using all his efforts, and managed to gather a roster of four Divine Selections and over twenty battle group champions to encircle and exterminate the Bone Shattering King.

And they succeeded in the encirclement.

Now, with the opening of the regiment page, combined with Glory Seeds and the specialized training items for the Blessed Child, ten to twenty Divine Selections and three hundred battle group champions can be crafted!

Directly ramps up the apex combat power significantly!

Gu Hang believes this is the largest gain after the regiment system page was opened.

However, as significant as the gains are, the costs are equally high.

The cost in conventional resources is already not low.

After all, being such a elite individual unit, their equipment cannot be poor either, right?

Power armors shouldn't just use the grand model but should be of the high-quality version? That requires senior members or engineers from the Sect of Mechanics to handcraft them, with low output and slow speed.

The Alliance's best Terminator Power Armor now is the Iron Rider model, shouldn't the quantity of this equipment be increased? Shouldn't it also be made into a high-quality version?

Supporting Mortal Troops, supporting warships, and vehicles?

The cost of crafting these Blessed Children might be several times that of an equivalent number of conventional battle groups.

But this is still just a small portion.

The costs are mainly reflected in the expenditure of Gift Points.

Gu Hang estimated that to build all these five thousand Blessed Children according to his previously conceived highest standard, it would require approximately fifty-five million Gift Points!

On average, each Blessed Child costs him eleven thousand points.

The screening of new Interstellar Warrior blood from tens of thousands of mortal youths, screening round by round from T5-level soldiers to T1-level, resulting in a single-digit number of candidates, unavoidably incurs extra Gift Points losses for those who can't be trained to T1-level and stop at T2—although they can also be added to various troop units as elite soldiers and are welcomed by various units.

Then, surgeries for implantation need to be performed, and accelerated growth needs to be exchanged.

This part of the conventional Interstellar Warrior training path costs one thousand Gift Points each.

The exchange price of Glory Seeds is two thousand per unit.

To proceed all the way with specialized Interstellar Warrior training exchanges, from veteran to sergeant to exemplar to company champion, three thousand points are gone.

The specialized training item for Blessed Child costs five thousand each.

In total, for a Blessed Child Interstellar Warrior, eleven thousand Gift Points are spent in this manner.

This number makes Gu Hang hesitate a little—if it's only for crafting five elite battle groups, it's indeed too lavish and expensive.

Such a huge amount of Gift Points could be used to cultivate talents, stabilize society, enhance political control, exchange for factories and schools, and develop the economy...

But considering the part about raising apex combat power, Gu Hang suddenly stops hesitating.

Create! Create boldly!

When encountering powerful individual enemies, the deployment of Blessed Children can effectively solve the problem!

...

In the initial formation located on the Dark Side of the Empire, it's not just the Saints alone.

Chapter 899: The Blood Angels' Call for Aid (2)

Oh, in a strict sense, the Saints don't belong to the Dark Side of the Empire.

The home planet of the Saints is actually located in the Holy Territory of the Empire. It's just because of the Seven Star Corridor that they ended up fighting on the Dark Side, maintaining the corridor's stability.

In the Dark Side of the Empire, especially in the Eastern Cosmos Domain, there are actually two founding legions' home planets.

The first is the Phoenix Legion.

These are old acquaintances, not only were they the initial legion of the Alliance, the parent legion of Phoenix, but during the Iron Armor War, they fought alongside the Alliance. Gu Hang has saved the life of the Lord of the Phoenix, Su Lie, and his whole legion.

The relationship between both parties can be said to be quite good. After Su Lie was promoted to represent the Interstellar Warriors, becoming one of the High Lords, he continuously provided political support to Gu Hang in the Imperial Supreme Council.

However, his legion suffered excessively during the Iron Armor War. Phoenix is... a legion with quite an issue when it comes to reinforcements.

The compatibility of the Genetic Seeds is almost the worst of the lot. Their operational methods are average, and though the leaders of Phoenix have always been reliable, cherishing the lives of their warriors, they unfortunately encountered the Iron Armor War, ending up with only just over two hundred people...

This situation makes their reinforcement extremely difficult.

Although the Glory Queen Battleship was preserved, the conventional warships of the legion suffered too much loss.

Such great losses are no longer something their home planet—Divine Bird Star—can compensate for.

Su Lie aimed to utilize the Empire's strength to recover the legion's vitality more quickly, hence he sought out relationships with other legions, gaining a position as a representative of the Interstellar Warriors.

Before the great catastrophe occurred, Su Lie and the main force of the legion were stationed near Holy Terra, using the supplies he managed to obtain and the help from the Sect of Mechanics to lick their wounds and recuperate.

Only fifty Phoenix Warriors remained on Divine Bird Star to guard the home planet.

The home planet of Phoenix is located in the Ningshou Cosmic Domain, now recovered by the Alliance. These fifty Phoenix Warriors have little resistance against the Alliance, but they clearly can't represent the legion, nor can they be recognized by the system.

Gu Hang wasn't inclined to have these fifty warriors do anything, so he let them continue guarding their home planet...

At the Imperial's Eastern Frontier, there's another founding legion encountered as well.

Soon after the Seven Star Corridor campaign concluded, while the Alliance gradually took over the Mercifat Star Domain, the Southern Line Expeditionary Force, upon reaching the Netherworld Star Domain in the Hexiang Cosmic Domain, received a request for aid from the Blood Angel Corps.

The home planet of the Blood Angel Corps, the birthplace of the Son of God·Archangel, is located at the Lord Star in the Hexiang Cosmic Domain's Netherworld Star Domain.

Named 'Lord,' it seems like a religious world—the reality is indeed so. This planet holds strong beliefs in the Emperor, the National Church, and the former Archangel. It's considered a religious world for sure.

However, the most notable aspect of this planet is its harsh natural environment.

Red sand flies everywhere, the toxic sunlight brings deadly radiation, and people must regularly inject anti-radiation agents and wear anti-radiation clothing to survive.

The land is extremely barren and lacks water.

Various mutated wild beasts roam the deserts.

Yet in such harsh environments emerged the Son of God held in the history and legends of the Empire, acclaimed as the Archangel, Saint Gerard.

Over time, it also nurtured generations of Blood Angels.

However, a powerful Insect Nest Fleet has invaded the Netherworld Star System and is heading straight for the home planet of the Blood Angels.

Generally, people believe the Void Insect Species are terrifying and highly intelligent. But their intelligence is mainly reflected in their quick learning of prey and adapting suitable tactics, possessing strong swarm thinking, yet are primarily driven by feeding instincts, supposedly lacking distinct strategic thinking.

As long as they have food.

However, this Insect Nest Fleet is different.

When they appeared, their goal was very clear; they were targeting the Blood Angels.

To advance swiftly and capture their target soon, even when they conquered certain planets, their plunder and consumption of the planets were unlike usual cases of eating until depletion. They merely took what they could quickly consume and digest, then promptly moved on.

This carries a sense of vengeance.

The Blood Angels once achieved a glorious victory over the swarm.

The emerging swarm seemed to be here for revenge.

Upon realizing this, the Blood Angels engaged in arduous and exceptional resistance battles, fighting multiple battles in different Star Sectors against the swarm.

Looking at the overall situation, they mostly lost.

This Insect Nest Fleet's scale is overwhelmingly large; even though the Blood Angels summoned several sub-legions and integrated the local Imperial Star Realm Army, navy, and Planetary Defense Force, they couldn't withstand it.

But they didn't intend to achieve an outright victory.

The main goal of roadside obstructions was to slow down the Insect Nest Fleet's pace, buying time for the rear.

From this perspective, they achieved their goal.

Chapter 899: Blood Angels' Call for Aid (Part 3)

With the time they fought hard to gain, the Blood Angels did two things.

Firstly, through personnel evacuation, and even by directly enforcing the Extinction Order without evacuation, they created a void wasteland.

As the Swarm passed through the barren land of these dozens of worlds, they received no supplies and consumed no biomass.

Even those planets originally responsible for stalling the Swarm, if the battle turned unfavorable, the Extinction Order weapons buried within the surface would be detonated by humans.

If they couldn't stop them, they would perish with the Swarm.

In doing so, they would also burn all biomass on the planets, leaving nothing for the insects to consume.

Of course, Extinction Order weapons are quite rare, and the number the Blood Angels hurriedly collected was insufficient for use everywhere.

So, they used them only on the most prosperous and populous worlds.

This decision was made cold-bloodedly but was nonetheless a necessary action in dire circumstances.

The worlds that activated the Extinction Order indeed had billions, even tens to hundreds of billions of populations, dying under the Blood Angels' Extinction Order. But in reality, with the insect invasion unstoppable, these Empire Worlds' people had no chance of survival anyway. The difference was whether they would be buried in the Swarm's belly and transformed into biomass to fuel the Insect Race army or die swiftly and cleanly by the Extinction Order.

As for the second effort the Blood Angels made after gaining time, it was to call for reinforcements as much as possible.

The primary reinforcements were the Blood Angel Subgroups scattered across various regions.

Under the natural mission of defending the home star, many subgroups answered the call of the parent group.

Among them were even some with strained relations with the parent group.

Also, some groups deemed as traitor battle groups by the Empire accepted the call.

The most famous among them was the Blood Knights battle group—they were declared traitors and labeled as 'Blood Drinking Ghosts' in the wanted order.

This leads to the significant flaw contained in the genetic seeds of the Blood Angel lineage. All Blood Angel descendants, under the influence of genetic seeds, are usually handsome in appearance, and gentle and exalted in character.

These admirable qualities stem from their noble Son of God.

However, the Blood Angels are naturally born with 'Bloodlust Syndrome.' In fierce battles, the rage and bloodthirsty desire in their hearts put them at risk of losing control. Only by drinking the blood of enemies, or even their own, can they alleviate this madness.

This style once caused the entire Blood Angel Corps to be referred to as the 'Vampire Legion' in the past—which was not a flattering name.

But when the Son of God appeared and began leading the entire corps, he reversed this situation, leading by example and guiding the corps to learn restraint and control over their desires, and renamed the corps with the name 'Angel.'

Under his guidance, the ethos of the entire corps was indeed transformed thoroughly.

However, after the fall of the Son of God, the curse of bloodlust descended once again.

Most Blood Angel descendants embarked on the path of restraint and endurance. Based on this, they gained strength. Battle brothers who fell into complete madness due to the uncontrollable bloodlust curse were placed into the Death Company. Usually, they were heavily guarded. In crucial battles, they were used as disposable assets, sent into the most dangerous and low-survival battles, seeking a glorious end.

But there are also some Blood Angel battle groups that no longer restrain themselves and take a darker path, indulging the Bloodlust Syndrome.

The Blood Knights are such a group.

Throughout countless battles, despite their outstanding achievements, they always drank the blood of mortals in battle, whether civilians or allies.

They always caused massive ally casualties, and their behavior was seen as evil and heretical, ultimately angering Holy Terra and being declared traitors.

But even though they were declared traitors, they haven't actually betrayed. They often came uninvited to support battles on the Human Empire side, fiercely attacking human enemies—and then casually feast on some ally blood and flesh after the fight.

They held a candid attitude about this.

They believe humans are the Emperor's flock, and they, as Interstellar Warriors working for the Emperor, are like shepherd dogs managing the flock. Is eating some 'meat' a crime while working hard and combating human enemies?

As the parent group, the Blood Angels understand the ins and outs of the Blood Knights' traitor status.

They are not on the same path. The Blood Angels have always called upon all subgroups to uphold the corps' tradition, adhere to the teachings of the Son of God, exercise restraint, and maintain propriety.

Only by withstanding the desires at heart can one be a qualified Angel descendant. They are generous in providing the greatest help to those groups with particularly severe genetic defects. However, groups like the Blood Knights who have completely deviated from the path of the Son of God are unacceptable.

This is also why, as the parent group, they support the verdict of declaring groups like the Blood Knights as traitors.

As the Battle Group Leader and the chief Commander of the Lord Star defense campaign, the Empire's legendary hero, whose recorded age has reached 1500 years, Dante is a staunch pragmatist.

At this critical moment, he no longer considers the different paths, morals, and qualities of various battle groups.

The strength of one or two more battle groups is of significant importance.

Especially these Blood Angel battle groups that have thoroughly embarked on the path of madness; they possess even more terrifying fighting power than ordinary Blood Angels.

This is a power that needs to be leveraged.

Before the final defense campaign of the Lord Star began, the Blood Angel Corps gathered more than thirty battle groups, totaling twenty-one thousand Blood Angel descendants, to participate in the war.

The results of the war were extremely tragic.

Seven battle groups were completely destroyed, eleven battle groups were almost entirely wiped out, leaving only a few survivors, while the remaining groups were generally reduced to only one or two squads.

Of the twenty-one thousand Blood Angel descendants, ultimately, only about five thousand survived.

Even the legendary hero Dante was severely injured in the blood fight and fell into a coma.

And it was at this time that the Alliance arrived at the battlefield.

Chapter 900: The Angel’s Pyrrhic Victory

Dante’s consciousness floated in the void for what felt like an eternity. He dreamed he was lying at the bottom of a pool of blood, countless decaying hands dragging him into the abyss.

Those hands belonged not only to his fallen Blood Angel offspring but also to countless mortals beyond counting. They emerged from the viscous blood plasma, their faces gnawed by the insect swarm screaming silently as if cursing and questioning him.

He kneeled by the edge of the blood pool, tears streaming down his face, constantly confessing and apologizing.

It wasn’t until a soothing breath pierced his chest cavity that he snapped his eyes open.

"Wonderful, you’re awake."

Dante could hear the speaker’s excitement.

It was his battle brother, the Blood Angels’ Pharmacist.

He was very familiar with his medical officer, naturally.

However, standing beside the medical officer was someone he didn’t recognize.

Yet, looking at him felt... ’familiar’.

Familiar mainly from his paint scheme—blood-red—identical to the Blood Angel Corps.

If one had to point out a difference, firstly, his stature was even taller than an average Interstellar Warrior. This level of height exceeded the scope of individual difference.

Additionally, the emblem on his shoulder was different from the Blood Angels'; it was shaped like a scythe.

Dante slowly spoke: "I don't recall any offspring of the Blood Angels with this emblem. Could this unfamiliar battle brother solve a puzzle for an old fool?"

He called himself an old fool, but he surely wasn't confused.

Dante sensed a familiar kinship from the bloodline of this tall interstellar warrior, allowing him to be nearly certain this was a blood brother of Saint Gerard's offspring.

But it was merely a feeling.

Dante was far from confused; he had memorized every sub-group of the Blood Angels in his mind. Whether they were destroyed, lost, or betrayed, he remembered them.

But he didn't remember this emblem.

What's more, his unusual physique also puzzled Dante.

In his gentle inquiry, he stealthily moved his hand down, ready to grab the weapon at his lower back.

He habitually hid a dagger there.

But he couldn't find it.

His armor had been completely removed, leaving him utterly naked, where no dagger could be hidden.

Additionally, his body felt very wrong.

Firstly, he was extremely weak, and even the simple action of reaching back caused him tremendous pain.

He recalled the events before his coma, fighting fiercely surrounded by enemies. He had killed countless foes, among them insect nest tyrants and executioner tyrants.

Yet eventually, he couldn’t withstand the endless siege as wounds accumulated, leading him to lose consciousness and fight only by instinct.

From that point forth, he remembered nothing.

He initially thought he was dead.

Looking now, it seemed he had reclaimed his life, though the injuries would take time to fully recover from.

Besides the weakness, he felt a special energy pulsating within his body.

This force swiftly repaired his body, but it was unfamiliar.

"Please don’t move," the unfamiliar battle brother spoke, "Your chest still has three pieces of insect race armor lodged in it, and your right lung is completely carbonized. You need to rest, and after this fortified potion is administered, a surgery will get you out of danger."

"Regarding your previous question, I can answer it. I’m Yuren Sosa, chief pharmacist of the Crimson Scythe battle group. Our battle group was established during the fourth Dark Side Expedition and has a relatively short history of just twenty-three years. However, we received continued requests for aid from the mother group and came to support..."

Claiming Sosa, the Crimson Scythe pharmacist explained quite a bit, but the more Dante listened, the less he comprehended.

Crimson Scythe? Never heard of it.

Wasn’t notification supposed to be sent to the mother group when a sub-group was established?

What is the Dark Side Expedition?

History of only twenty-three years? Twenty-three years ago, did the Empire hold a founding ritual for the Holy Blood sub-group?

Didn’t the Scarlet Scar tear the Empire into two? Could the Empire have new battle groups to support the Dark Side in just twenty-three years?

He had so many questions in his mind.

"Rest first, and then hear the tale when you’re better." Sosa suggested.

"No, I need to know the truth."

In their gaze, Sosa yielded to the legendary hero of the Empire.

He recounted the experiences of the support troops.

They came from the fourth Dark Side Expedition, indeed. The so-called Dark Side Expedition was authorized by Gu Hang, the governor, High Lord of the Alliance of the Empire’s Dark Side. It involved constructing a Starfighter Battle Group using Genetic Seed Banks they collected.

Currently, the Dark Side Expedition has reached the Hexiang Cosmic Domain, where the Blood Angels are located.

After receiving the Blood Angels' call for aid, they immediately arrived on the battlefield.

Even Gu Hang himself was there because he valued the Blood Angel Corps, personally arriving on the battlefield.

However, by the time the main force of the Alliance's Southern Line Expeditionary Force arrived, the Blood Angels and their offspring were already nearing defeat against this gigantic insect nest tentacle fleet.

The Blood Angels and their offspring, along with countless mortal armies, had fought bravely, suffering huge losses and sacrifices, exhausting the insect nest's forces to a near-breaking point.

Yet manpower was limited, and it seemed the Blood Angels were on the verge of total annihilation before exhausting the insect swarm's living forces.

Once the insect nest completed its massacre, they could acquire vast amounts of biomass—not just in quantity, but terrifyingly high in quality.

At that time, shortly after recovery, the insect nest's size could restore half or even more; more frighteningly, its prime nest creatures' combat ability and quantity would reach new heights, becoming even more powerful enemies than those that invaded the Netherworld Star System.

From this perspective, the Alliance came just in time.

They intervened in the battle, providing desperately needed living forces to the Blood Angels, giving them a moment to breathe while bringing substantial material and equipment supplies, allowing the Blood Angels, once almost depleted, to regain some combat power.

The Alliance's advance fleet and the remnants of the Blood Angels thus managed to endure the most dangerous period.

Later, led by Gu Hang, the main force of the Alliance's Southern Line descended upon the battlefield.

The insect nest, already on the brink of collapse, couldn’t hold up any longer.

They conceded defeat and began to retreat, but faced pursuit and were eventually annihilated, with the Queen also slain.

This was the Empire’s greatest victory over the Void Insect Species in history, and the method of victory was unique: through a brutal and arduous bloodbrawl that exhausted the insect species to death.

"Thus you see, we won, Battle Group Leader," Sosa’s gaze carried respect when he said this.

Yet Dante couldn’t laugh:

"How many did we lose?"

His voice sounded like sandpaper scraping metal.

When his Pharmacist began reporting the fatality numbers, he raised his hand to stop, "Just tell me how many angels can still stand."

"Currently, 4,721 remain. Of those, able to fight... no more than three thousand."

These were the mere remnants of the twenty-one thousand Blood Angel offspring.